The New REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

VOLUME XIV | New York, Saturday, March 2, 1918 | Number 174

Contents

Editorial Notes 123
Out of the Shell Hole of War,—Cartoon ..... R. Weed 125
Leading Editorials
The War Diplomacy of American Labor 126
For or Against Russia 127
Russia and Japan in the Far East 130
Ships and Organized Labor 132
General Articles
The Soil of France ..... Elizabeth Shepley Sergeant 134
Rembrandt's Etchings in the Public Library. Leo Stein 137
The Twilight of Natural Rights ..... R. L. Duffus 139
Jerusalem and After ..... H. Sidebotham 141
Instead of Revolution ..... George Soule 142
Correspondence 144
At the Capitol ..... G. S. 147
After the Play ..... Q. K. 148
Reviews of Books
Richard Harding Davis ..... F. H. 149
Topography and Treachery ..... A. J. 150
The Guild Idyl ..... R. B. 151

VON HERTLING'S answer to President Wilson's address of February 11th may or may not be intended as a really conciliatory overture. But if it is to lead to further parleys which amount to anything, there are several serious ambiguities which must straightway be cleared up. The President in his address occupied most of his time in a sharp criticism of the present German policy, clearly revealed in the German Chancellor's preceding speech, of seeking to conclude peace by special arrangements between the Central Powers and their several enemies. Mr. Wilson's four principles were an attempt to formulate rules which could be applied to all territorial changes and should be accepted by all the Powers. The parleys, consequently, cannot be carried much further unless the German government announces its willingness to abandon its policy of special arrangements and to negotiate a general peace on the basis of previously accepted general principles. Neither can they be carried much further, until Mr. Wilson's authority to speak for the other governments associated with the American government in carrying on the war is fully admitted. As these conditions are essential and yet very far from being realized, the parleys must soon either lapse or assume a much more candid and realistic character.

THE impending "peace" between Germany and Russia is as unprecedented and fantastic as the futile negotiations at Brest-Litovsk. Germany continues to conduct military operations against the government which has nominally accepted her terms and Lenine declares that acceptance of German terms is only the prelude to subsequent renewal of the war. In truth the peace is a warlike manoeuvre on the part of the Bolshevik and the German governments. By means of it the Bolsheviki hope to prevent themselves from being superseded and so to keep their propaganda alive, and the German government is planning to use it for the purpose of penetrating Russia, obtaining supplies and eventually of setting up a really subservient counter-revolutionary government. The Germans, it scarcely need be said, are getting the better of the bargain. The Bolsheviki cannot long survive the humiliation of being so completely worsted, and as a consequence of their collapse Russia will for an indefinite period be exposed to the full force of German physical and moral pressure. That she will recover eventually and throw off German interference we do not doubt for one moment, but as long as the war lasts and probably for some time thereafter the Germans will be able to use Russians in order to dominate Russia just as the English use Indians in order to rule India. Whether the recuperation comes quickly or is long delayed will depend chiefly on the ability of the Russian revolution's friends in other countries to protect it against the many enemies which are conspiring to destroy it.

IN the meantime the Allied governments should never forget their own measure of responsibility for Russian political disintegration. It was their encouragement of counter-revolutionary interests

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

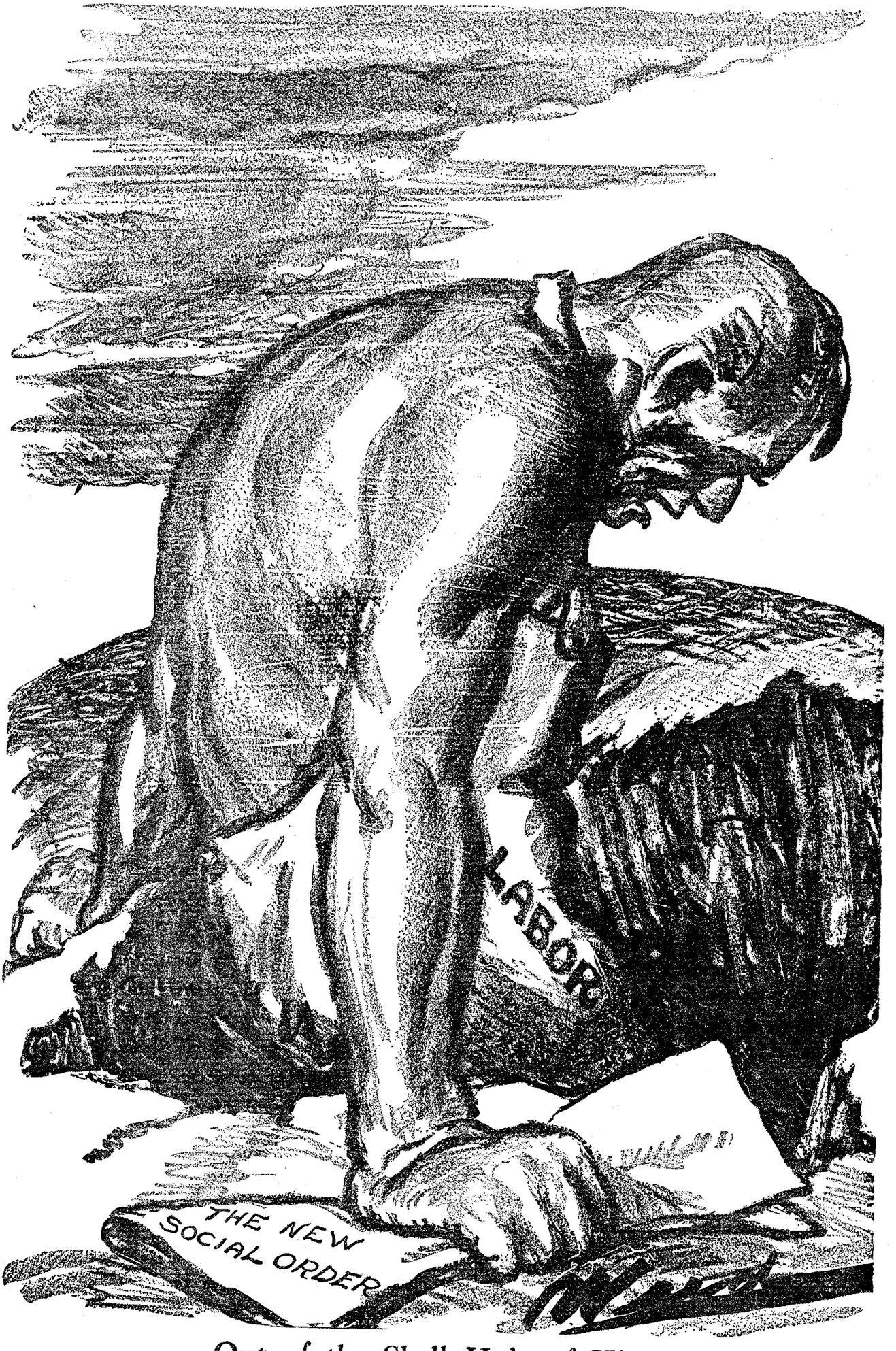
in Russia, their readiness to recognize counter-revolutionary organizations such as the Ukrainian republic and their indifference to the appeals of pro-Ally Russians for political assistance and moral support, which gradually removed the obstacles to the triumph of the Bolsheviki. The story has been frequently told, but it has been recently repeated by Arno Dosch-Fleurot, the correspondent of the New York World in Petrograd. According to him "the Bolshevik revolution would not have taken place, a separate armistice would not have been signed with Germany with the possibility of a separate peace, if it had not been for a whole series of mistakes on the part of the Allied governments in relation to Russia," and the World in a subsequent editorial declares, "There can be no question about the complete failure of Allied diplomacy in dealing with the Russians." It might have added: "There can be no question about the complete failure of the American newspapers to warn the Allied diplomats of their mistakes." The World itself was one of the worst offenders in this respect. So far from doing anything to support the Russian plea for a restatement of the Allied war aims, it consistently resisted the demand as inimical to the successful prosecution of the war. Inasmuch as according to the World's own admission the Allied diplomacy which it supported is at least partly responsible for the Russian defalcation, should not the World withdraw its characterization of Russia, made after the President had already indicated the need of a new diplomatic policy, as a "Judas among nations"?

ACADEMIC freedom has found its sanest and most far-seeing exponent in the President of Harvard University. The professor ought to be absolutely free in classroom teaching on subjects within the scope of his chair. He ought to be free to publish his lectures or the results of his investigations, subject only to the qualification that what he writes should be uttered in a scholarly tone and form. He ought not to foist upon a class that is compelled to listen to him opinions on subjects outside of the field of his special competence, but this is a minor point, not actually calling for discipline. As a man, he is bound to have opinions on other subjects than his own, and even though these opinions may in the judgment of most of his colleagues be injudicious and injurious to the institution of learning of which he is a member, it is still dangerous to place restrictions upon his uttering them outside of the class room. Men of ability will not enter the profession of university teaching if they are to be deprived of the rights of expression enjoyed by all other men. As to the theory that in time of war professors should be subject to special restrictions not applicable in time of peace, President Lowell rejects it unconditionally. On the assumption that the opinions that he utters are sincere, not couched in a form that gives evidence of moral obliquity, the professor ought to be free, and the Harvard professor, at any rate, is in fact free.

CONGRESSMEN are soon to be elected in four New York City districts. The registration days were at the end of last week. Of the women who might have registered only about a quarter did so. The New York Times says: "Of the three-fourths who did not register it is reasonably certain that most, if not all, were Republicans and Democrats. We can be pretty certain that all the Socialist women registered." Why do Socialist women take their civic privileges so much more seriously than women who are Democrats or Republicans? The Times says that the Socialist candidates are running as opponents of the war and that "a large vote for them will be interpreted by the disloyal as indicating war-weariness on the part of New York." But why did patriotism prove itself so much weaker a motive on registration days than disloyalty? Three weeks ago the Times said, not in an editorial, that "copies of German newspapers received in London show that 'opposition to woman suffrage among German women' comes mainly from the Prussian women Junkers." Apply this to the New York situation and we get this result: the registration was light because the New York women Junkers were too Junkerish to register.

MANY doubts are beginning to be heard whether the much advertised German offensive will ever take place. These doubts the New Republic has always shared and has frequently expressed. To be sure the Germans have been able to concentrate in the west a sufficient number of soldiers and a sufficient amount of material to make an offensive possible. If political conditions look favorable they are willing and ready to attack. But except in the wholly improbable contingency of the invention by the High Command of some weapon or tactics which promise a considerable victory, the Germans will continue as they have done for eighteen months to subordinate military to political strategy. At present their political strategy is so successful that they do not need to use up their reserves in an offensive on the strongest part of the Allied line. They can afford to wait and consolidate their recent political and economic victories. But of course they will not for long pursue merely a waiting policy. They are holding themselves ready to attack any part of the Allied line where

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Out of the Shell Hole of War

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the opportunities of military and political advantage outweighs the cost in men and munitions. But the attack when it comes will be sudden, and will probably be preceded by an elaborate feint in some other direction. It may be the French and English, however, rather than the Germans who will actually begin the fighting this spring.

FINLAND'S claim to recognition as an independent state stands on an altogether different footing from the claims of the Ukraine, Lithuania and Poland. The inhabitants of Finland, although divided into Swedish speaking and Finnish speaking groups, have a high degree of homogeneity and an intense national consciousness. The country has enjoyed autonomy since time out of mind and was able successfully to resist the recent tendencies toward Russification. There is no serious question as to boundaries, nor is there any question as to the representative character of the Finnish government. Finland is not in the stage of provisional governments, but has already a constitution that approaches nearer to the democratic ideal than any other country in the world enjoys. Those who believe that in the future the world is to be parceled out among a few great supernational empires will regret the decision of Finland to separate herself entirely from Russia. They believe that Finnish independence is most likely to prove nothing but a prelude to German dominance. For the present, however, the only chance that Finland may fall definitely under German influence lies in the possibility that German aid may be necessary to protect her independence against an unsympathetic government in Petrograd.

"IT is notorious," said an English psychologist in 1915, "that the atmosphere of a great war is unfavorable to free speculation." The case of Thorstein Veblen's book, The Nature of Peace, continues to illustrate this truism. Although Dr. Veblen stated in so many words that "there is no outlook for peace except on the elimination of Germany as a power capable of disturbing the peace," because of "the maggoty conceit of national domination," he did indulge in some high ironic speculation on "peace without honor." A small group of men who apparently feed exclusively on canned quotations now announce loudly that Dr. Veblen has advised Americans to quit cold and submit to German domination lying down. The latest victim of these ptomained quotations is Mr. Henry A. Wise Wood of New York. Giving no evidence that he has ever opened the book he is attacking, using the same extracts that Dr. Hobbs used last week, practically in the same order and without addition, Mr. Wood declares that Dr. Veblen is the author of "amazingly damnable pro-German propaganda" and adds that "Professor Veblen's thoughts, logic and arguments are of the sort that started the Huns on their present mission to conquer the world." This, of course, is stupid, but irony is always likely to inflame the stupid. Isn't it lucky for Dean Swift that he died before the irate Mr. Wood could have denounced him for his amazingly damnable cannibalism?

THE Woman's Land Army of America is the extension of the unit plan which was tried last summer in New York State. By it the workers are organized into group-communities in charge of trained women, and from these centres they go daily to the neighboring farms. The plan was an entire success. The Advisory Council of the Women's Land Army of America, 32 Fifth Avenue, New York City, is now issuing an appeal to all able-bodied American women to enlist for the increase of agricultural production. It should be responded to.

The War Diplomacy of American Labor

FEW episodes connected with American participation in the war have been more distressing to American liberals than the behavior of Mr. Gompers towards the recent inter-Allied Labor conference in London. Mr. Gompers did not, as was first charged, directly accuse such men as Arthur Henderson and Albert Thomas of allowing themselves to be used as catspaws by the Germans, but in his message rejecting representation of American labor in the conference he implied such an accusation. The recent inter-Allied conference was called for a twofold purpose. Considering the claims which the labor organizations of all the Allied countries had put in for representation at the official peace conference, it was necessary for them to formulate a common statement of war aims. But they proposed in addition to consider the calling at a later date of a labor socialist conference on neutral soil, to which German and Austrian socialists would be invited. Mr. Gompers has always treated the idea of such a general conference as a German intrigue, so that the garbled version of his message to the London gathering which accused the British labor leaders of conniving at such an intrigue, was not entirely misrepresentative. Inasmuch as the recent labor congress decided to call a conference which included Germans, its leaders must at best in Mr. Gompers' opinion be earmarked as the victims of German machinations. His inability to understand the reasons in favor of such a conference which have appealed so strongly to the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

organized workers of France and Great Britain, is one of the anomalies and may in the end become one of the calamities of the war.

American labor has followed the example of organized labor in other countries and claimed official representation at the final peace conference. But the claim is deprived of all meaning by the attitude towards all discussion of war aims adopted by Mr. Gompers and his associates. The basis of any claim for the independent representation of labor interests at the peace conference must be the conviction that the workers are capable of making a special contribution to the construction of a satisfactory settlement, and this conviction has been fully justified by the work of the British labor party. But if labor is entitled to representation and is capable of contributing to satisfactory settlement, its leaders must qualify themselves for the task by discussing the terms of the settlement with labor in other countries. When Mr. Gompers repudiates any such conference, when he condemns the discussion of war aims in advance of military victory as mischievous, he is in effect denying that American labor has any contribution of its own to offer at the conference table. It is no wonder, consequently, that the British and French labor leaders are in distress and anxiety sending a delegation to this country to plead for assistance from American labor. At the very moment when French and British labor are preparing, if necessary, to oppose their own governments in order to back up what they believe to be the policy of the American government, American labor refuses to cooperate with them.

In the past Mr. Gompers has rendered invaluable service to the cause of American labor unionism. Since the war began his loyalty to the government and his influence in securing the active cooperation of the American Federation of Labor have been of incalculable assistance to President Wilson. But by his present course he is running the danger of provoking American labor to forget his past services and of raising an obstacle to the realization of the President's diplomatic policy. At a moment when the workers of all countries are trembling over the fate of the Russian revolution, Mr. Gompers cannot see anything in the present plight of the revolutionists except the obscene spectacle of a "gang of radicals" "licking the boots of the Kaiser and praying for mercy." At the moment when the President, in the development of his diplomatic policy, is trying to provoke public parleys and obtain the confidence of the German socialists, Mr. Gompers denounces the public discussion of war aims and pours out abuse on the German socialists. His policy maintains the Federation of Labor as a useful instrument of the American army, but if an American wishes to find labor leaders who understand and are intelligently supporting the political strategy of his own government, he must turn to France and England.

For or Against Russia?

ALTHOUGH there is no apparent prospect of an early armistice and a peace conference, the terms of the ultimate settlement in their general tendency will probably be determined during the next few weeks. The political issues which underlie the fighting are coming to a head. Little by little the negotiations of the Central Powers with the Ukrainian republic and with the Russian government, supplemented by the long distance parleys which President Wilson has been conducting with von Hertling and Czernin, have reached a critical stage. The German "peace offensive" has scored an initial and substantial success. Trotzky and Lenine are being brought to terms or crowded to the wall. Furious but impotent, they are forced to take decisions which they would have preferred to avoid or delay. Their action will place a similar constraint on the governments of the United States and the western Powers. The Allies will soon have to choose one among several alternatives and upon the choice made by them the ultimate political results of the war are likely to depend.

There are, we believe, four of these alternatives:

(1) The Allied governments can propose or agree to an early peace conference on the bases of no indemnities, the territorial status quo ante, progressive disarmament and a League of Nations. This would mean an acceptance of the idea so often repudiated of a "white peace."

(2) The Allied governments can return to the policy actually pursued by them in the past, but modified recently through the initiative of President Wilson and the British Labor party, of fighting for the one declared common purpose of breaking down the military resistance of the Central Powers. Then they will dictate a settlement to suit themselves.

(3) They can, as Lloyd George intimated they would some time ago, wash their hands of Russia as a treacherous deserter, and thus inferentially recognize the treaties which the German and Austrian governments are now forcing on that helpless and distracted country. As this policy would turn Russia over to Germany and would be writing into the peace terms a future war between Germany and Russia, the only object which the Allies could have in continuing to fight would be to secure for themselves territorial gains which would form some measure of compensation for the aggrandizement of Germany and Austria. The

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fighting would be continued indefinitely, and the compensations would depend on the military situation at its end.

(4) They can declare publicly and emphatically as one unalterable basis of their peace diplomacy a repudiation of the Russian special treaties and a determination to insist upon the same treatment for Russia at the peace conference as if the Russians had continued to fight. None but a general peace will be discussed and a general peace will be discussed only on the basis of declared principles, which will not be applied in one case and ignored in another. The war will be continued until the Central Powers consent to negotiate on this basis and until the full implication of this basis of negotiation has been exposed to the world by preliminary public parleys.

The first of these four alternatives is the one preferred by the pacifists, who resisted the entrance of the United States into the war and seek to terminate the fighting immediately and at almost any cost. They consider it more important to put an end to the destruction, the suffering and the slaughter than it is to insist stubbornly on any particular peace settlement. The best way out is to accept any adjustment which is not the manifest result of an emphatic military victory, and which bears the appearance of being an even break. What the terms are makes comparatively little difference. Once peace is attained and the nations return from their wanderings in the desert of the war to their ordinary wholesome preoccupation with their domestic affairs, the ensuing revolutions or reconstructions will remove the apparently insuperable obstacles to the achievement as a part of war policy of an enduring and satisfactory peace. There can be no secure and stable international organization until the nations are socialized and regenerated, and as long as the war lasts the sources of socialization are impoverished and poisoned.

This pacifist programme has in our opinion the calculation of probabilities all against it. As the failure of Trotzky indicates, peace-seekers cannot obtain by such tactics an even break; they can only convert the existing German military preponderance into a substantial political victory. At the present time, even if the German government nominally consented to the territorial status quo ante, which is doubtful, it would do so for the purpose of concealing behind the phrase a peculiarly sinister plan of imperialist exploitation and aggrandizement. It would expect by juggling with the principle of the self-determination of nationalities to bind to itself a group of parasite states, which would necessarily be dependent on the German army to protect them against Russia, and which would be bound to place their own armed forces at the dictation of the German military authorities. The result would be a new vindication of the leadership of the German ruling class, the aggrandizement of their prestige and their military resources and the increasing discouragement or alarm of its enemies at home and abroad. Doubtless a successful revolution in Germany would remain among the possibilities, but everything would have been done which could be done in advance, to hamper the revolutionists. For the alarm at German aggrandizement which would be intensified throughout the world would result in continued competition in armaments directed chiefly against Germany, and these armaments could be used by the German government to back up persuasive pleas for the indiscriminate loyalty of its own citizens. Among all the nations the familiar combination of credulity, suspicion, fear and hatred would give the von Tirpitzes and the Maxses every tactical advantage over the Bernsteins and the Arthur Hendersons.

The American democracy and the other democracies of the world might just as well fight out the issue with the German government now as later. Many pacifists hug the illusion that only an immediate peace can save the Russian revolution. As a matter of fact the only kind of peace which can now be obtained from Germany tends to ruin the Russian revolution. There is only one sufficient explanation of the present behavior of the German government. It is afraid of the Russian revolutionary agitation and has deliberately adopted the policy of protecting itself by destroying the new republic. As part of this policy it is signing up treaties with committees who are supposed to represent the minor nationalities of Russia, but which really represent the counter-revolutionary interests. Then in order to protect its creatures it carries on a ruthless aggressive war against the revolution, which will be continued until there is set up in Petrograd under German influence a safe reactionary government. Trotzky's peace offensive succeeded in a way he did not expect. It became so embarrassing to the German rulers that in order to protect themselves they decided to "get" Trotzky and to suppress by force Bolsheviki revolutionism. Peace with Germany on the basis proposed by the pacifists would be to connive at the fulfilment of this manifest and perfectly practicable plan. It would be equivalent to placing behind a Germanized Russia the full force of the general indisposition at the end of the war again to break the peace.

The only way to put up an effective resistance to the German strategy is to continue for the present to fight, but to fight on a platform which leaves no doubt as to where the Allies stand in the new

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

war between the Russian revolution and German autocracy. The decisive and sufficient drawback to the second alternative of fighting for no purpose but military victory is the barrier which it erects against moral cooperation between the Russian revolution and the Allied western democracies. The Russian revolutionists associate the programme of fighting for military victory alone with the secret treaties which the Romanoff government made with France, Great Britain and Italy and which were clearly intended to convert military victory into the instrument of an imperialist settlement. Those treaties have never been explicitly repudiated by the western Powers. Their governments have never agreed upon a common statement of war aims which would protect the Russian revolutionist against the danger that in fighting with the Allies he was fighting in behalf of the programme of czarist diplomacy. The formula of victory as the only war aim is popular chiefly with people who consider the treaty of peace of slight importance compared to the complete justification of their natural resentment against Germany, and whose interest in peace terms is aroused chiefly by the chance of securing for their own country a better hand in what the President has called "the great game, now forever discredited, of the balance of power."

In fact this second alternative of military victory as the only war aim would work out in practice as nearly related to the third alternative of preparing now for a peace of imperialist compensations. The Russian revolution is providing an infallible touchstone of the good faith of the western democracies. They can no longer blow hot and cold. Now that it has been struggling for its life against the special enmity of the German autocracy they must either be for it or against it. If they are for it, their course is plain. They must be willing to overlook its excesses and its tendency towards anarchy and terrorism. Its excesses are the reaction against an excess of czarist "law and order," and are only dangerous to those countries which convert "law and order" into a pretext for the exploitation of the masses by a ruling class. In so far as they are democracies, they are bound to trust the Russian revolution and have faith in its ultimate power of recuperation. It is in this respect that they would differ most irreconcilably from an essentially autocratic state such as that of Germany, which is bound to fear and hate the revolution, to insist on its destruction and to pretend that by destroying it is vindicating an essential grace of civilization, such as the moral and social order. As an earnest of their trust in the Russian revolution they should give Russia reason to trust them by adjusting their war aims to those of Russia and by democratizing still further their domestic policies.

On the other hand, if they are against the Russian revolution and, what amounts to the same thing, convinced believers in human depravity, their course is equally plain. They will directly or indirectly assist Germany in destroying it. They would be doing so indirectly by consenting to the apparent ambition of Japan to accept the German example and to restore "law and order" in Russian territory in the Far East. They would be doing so indirectly by consenting to the special treaties which Germany is now making with the counter-revolutionary interests in Russia. We should be frank with ourselves as to the real meaning of the adoption by the western Allies of a policy of "washing their hands" of Russia. This kind of washing would not leave their hands clean. They would be presenting to Germany a field of economic and political penetration vaster and more lucrative than the German annexationist ever expected to obtain, and they would condemn themselves to the acceptance of a peace, which at best could only provide them with compensations for the German aggrandizement. If they can win a military victory the compensations might be considerable. If they cannot they would be inconsiderable. But in any event the treaty of peace would perpetuate all the most costly faults and defaults of the old international anarchy.

Once this course is adopted the United States would lose the war no matter whose armies were ultimately victorious. We should have failed to obtain the increased security, which can be born only of the writing of a democratic peace and the creation of a new and a better international order. The one acceptable American policy is indicated in the fourth alternative. It is the policy of risking and resting the union and success of the Allies upon the democracy of their programme as contrasted with the autocracy of that of Germany. It would mean an uncompromising resistance to these special treaties as the certain source of future international discord, a refusal to consent to the counter-revolution in Russia, even though the ability of the revolution itself to resist is temporarily broken down, and the subordination in all subsequent parleys of territorial controversies which invoke the shifting of power, to the organization of a League of Nations which would diminish the importance of the part played by power in international transactions. The adoption of such a policy depends chiefly on President Wilson. In his address of February 11th, he went further than ever in the attempt to democratize the war policy of America and that of her Allies. His apparent concessions on the territorial programme enabled him to assume a still more inflexible attitude in respect to the central purpose of using this war to dis-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

credit the militarist politics. He is aiming not only to protect Russia against Germany but to protect democracy against the increasing danger of an imperialist peace—one which would condemn the future democrat to a choice between hypocrisy and revolution. For only by allowing an aim of this kind to take complete possession of them can the Allies create a sufficient bond of union among themselves and a sufficient mark of distinction between themselves and the Central Empires. Because of the condition created by the Russian revolution, military victory unsupported by democratic diplomacy will jeopardize rather than assure the triumph of their political purposes. Political victory depends upon the quick and thorough-going democratization of the policy of the Alliance and of its leadership, and of the resolution, once this democratization is complete, of continuing to fight until the German autocracy admits defeat.

Russia and Japan in the Far East

"We can no longer believe in the pacific intention of Russia and must see that peace and order prevail in the occupied region of the adjoining countries."

VON KÜHLMANN.

"In the event of the peace of the Far East being endangered to the detriment of our interest, the Japanese government will not hesitate a moment to take proper measures, for Japan holds herself responsible for the maintenance of peace in that part of the world."

COUNT TERAUCHI.

DURING the past few months there have appeared from time to time newspaper statements that the Japanese have been landing troops at Vladivostok and that Japanese warships are guarding this Russian port. Although these rumors have been officially denied and the situation at Vladivostok is not entirely clear, they prophesy the coming of a new political issue in the Far East, which has an international significance little understood as yet by the public. The original reason given for Japanese occupation of Vladivostok was the fear of the Allies that the military supplies accumulated there might fall into the hands of their enemies. But there are at Vladivostok not more than fifteen or twenty million dollars worth of military supplies, which remained there because of the inability of the railroads to transport them into the interior of Russia. This was the situation several months ago when the railroads were in a tolerable state of efficiency. At the present time, however, portions of the Siberian railroad track are torn up, and it is practically impossible to cross the continent, and so the chance of these supplies getting into the hands of Germany is negligible. The growing anxiety of Japan for the maintenance of peace and a stable government in Russia and the despatch of warships to Vladivostok, with the possible or threatened landing of troops, is likely, therefore, to have some other significance.

Vladivostok at the present time is the only military and commercial port of any consequence on the Russian-Pacific Coast. It is the key to the Ussuri region and to the northern Russian portion of the Saghalien Island. Vladivostok lies at the southern extremity of the Ussuri region, which is bordered on the south by Korea, on the north by the Amur River, on the west by Manchuria, and on the east by the Japan Sea. The area included within the region is in the neighborhood of 25,000,000 acres. The northern part of Saghalien Island contains another 5,000,000 acres, so that together the two regions comprise about 30,000,000 acres of very sparsely populated and little cultivated land. The climate of this Ussuri region, which lies between the forty-three and fifty-three parallels of northern latitude, is similar to that of northern Manchuria. It has moderate winters with comparatively little snow and warm summers with a rainy season in July. Although it is too far north for the cultivation of rice, all the crops of the temperate region can be raised with fair success. The region was settled by the Cossacks in the seventies, but the entire population barely exceeds 200,000. The area under cultivation is still very insignificant, hardly ten per cent.

Both the Ussuri region and the northern Saghalien Island are rich in mineral resources. Thus, on the Saghalien Island near the post Duai, and to the south of it, along the coast of the Gulf of Tartary, are found deposits of coal of the Cardiff type, that is, of the most valuable coal for use in navigation. There are also large deposits of coal suitable for metallurgy and of coal deposits of the bituminous type. These deposits are conservatively estimated at one and one-half billion tons. Being close to the shore, they are most accessible and their mining should be easy. At present, however, mining is carried on in a most primitive way because of lack of port facilities. Steamers are loaded at sea, and this, on account of frequent storms in the Gulf of Tartary, is attended with many difficulties. The Saghalien coal is considered by geologists as being of a higher quality than any other coal found on the coast of the entire Pacific Ocean. Its supply is not less than that of Alaska or Vancouver but the per cent of semi-bituminous grades much larger. The Australian coal is possibly not inferior in quality, but its remoteness from the centres of consumption makes its use difficult. The best

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Japanese coal contains more than forty per cent of volatile matters, and is considered as a low-grade bituminous coal. The rich coal deposits of China and Manchuria are found in the interior of the continent; the railroad freights prevent its competition with the coast coal. By a peculiar coincidence, the fiftieth parallel, which marks the boundary between the Russian northern part of the southern Japanese part of the Island, marks also the southern end of the coal fields. The southern part of Saghalien now in possession of Japan, has practically no coal deposits.

Along the eastern coast of the Saghalien Island for a distance of two hundred miles there are also fields of oil and natural gas, so far, however, very little explored. That the oil fields of the Saghalien Island are of commercial value may be judged from the fact that the Russian provisional government has been sounded by foreign capitalists as to their development under a lease system. Here again, the Japanese, although they have oil fields of their own, yet have not enough to meet all the demands for oil products. That the Japanese government is also fully alive to the importance of the mineral deposits of the Saghalien Island is indicated by the despatch in the early spring of last year of a geological expedition to the northern Russian part of the Island in order to get first-hand knowledge of its natural resources.

In the Ussuri region proper there are also large coal fields. These are fully as large as those of Saghalien but are chiefly of the bituminous and lignite type. Of greater commercial importance, however, are its iron ore deposits. The largest field, which has already been commercially explored, is near the Bay of St. Olga on the coast of the Japan Sea; Japan has iron ore deposits; these, however, are not very large and the Japanese iron industry is dependent chiefly upon imported iron ore. In 1914, only 137,650 tons of iron ore were mined in Japan itself and 459,397 tons were imported from Korea and China. Thus, more than three-fourths of the demand for iron ore have been covered by importations. These three-fourths in tonnage do not really represent the actual deficiency in iron ore. The Japanese ore is of a very low grade, it furnishes not more than ten per cent of metal needed by the Japanese iron industry. In 1914 Japan imported iron and steel products to the volume of 533,636 tons. In the Ussuri region there are also active lead and zinc mines, the products of which before the war were exported entirely by sea to Hamburg. Finally there are known, although not sufficiently explored, molybdenite deposits along the coast of the Japan Sea, and gold fields in the Sihoti-Alin range. The entire region has been only very slightly explored and it is very probable that after further investigations new mineral resources will be discovered.

The mineral resources of the Ussuri region and of the northern part of the Saghalien Island are the key to the industrial and economic development of the Asiatic-Pacific Coast. The entire eastern part of Siberia and Manchuria are not furnished with important iron deposits and must depend upon importations from outside. Thus far the United States has been the chief exporter of iron, steel, and oil to Siberia. The coal deposits of Saghalien will also play a dominant part in the supremacy of the commercial and military fleet of the Pacific Ocean. Japan is deeply concerned in the development of the mineral resources of the region. Last July, when there appeared in the Russian papers rumors that some Americans had obtained concessions in the Russian Far East, the entire Japanese press, including even English organs, became excited.

These facts give some indication of the complexity and the intrinsic importance of the political, economic and commercial interests which are connected with the possession and the development of the Ussuri region and the Island of Saghalien. If the apprehensions expressed by Count Terauchi about the disturbance of peace in the Far East as a consequence of the Russian revolution result in the occupation of this Russian territory and its passage into the possession of Japan, the world would be presented with a perfect example of the annexationist imperialism which many democrats have hoped would be discouraged by the political results of the war. A world in which such annexations were possible, even on the pretext of maintaining peace and order, would be a world in which nations would be armed to the teeth for the purpose of winning exclusive political and economic advantages over their competitors.

Such being the general situation the Japanese government would do well for the present not to be too solicitous about the preservation of law and order in the Far East. Russian Bolshevikism is in no danger of undermining the existing governments of China, Korea or Japan; and if the peace of that region were converted into an excuse for the occupation of Russian territory it would produce a painful impression not only in Russia but among anti-imperialists throughout the world. The Russian socialists would consider the landing of a Japanese army with the consent of the Allies as proof of an intention on the part of the Allies to aid Germany in destroying the Revolution and profiting by its destruction. They would resent more bitterly the Japanese than the German invasion; because it would be a blow dealt by a friend rather than a frank enemy. Any action which is liable to misinterpretation should, consequently, be

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

avoided; and Japan can be sure, if it is avoided, that her legitimate interests will not suffer. In the past the vast and rich Ussuri region has been practically closed to settlement by the Japanese. The old Russian government allowed the Japanese to live in the larger cities but barred them from the country and particularly from owning land. In the future the Japanese can fairly claim different and better treatment. They would be entitled to some arrangement which would permit their industries as well as the industries of other nations to benefit from the development of the natural resources of this region. But, during the present crisis, intervention in Russia which could plausibly be suspected of concealing an economic advantage behind a political pretext, would be incompatible with the political purposes for which the western Allies are fighting.

Ships and Organized Labor

NOT since the war began has organized labor been subjected to such a drumfire of criticism as that which the press concentrated upon it during the recent strike of carpenters in the shipyards. The country was given to believe that the backwardness of our shipbuilding programme was primarily due to the slouching indifference of labor to the nation's appeal for tonnage and more particularly to the unpatriotic perversity of certain trade union leaders.

What were the facts? At the height of the press assault barely two thousand out of more than two hundred and twenty thousand shipyard workers were on strike. The President of the Carpenters' Brotherhood did make a point of the closed-shop issue contrary to the spirit of the agreement into which organized labor, through the American Federation and the international metal trades unions, had entered with the Emergency Fleet Corporation and the Navy. But the carpenters were not signatories to this agreement; they had stood out for the closed-shop from the beginning. Moreover, the strike was not a general strike called by the president of the Brotherhood; it was confined to a few locals of the union, with the apparent approval, to be sure, of the president. But the other shipyard unions did not support the closed-shop demand of these carpenters' locals, neither was it backed up by the great majority of the carpenters themselves. Because of the local action of a handful of carpenters, the press indicted all organized labor for an alleged conspiracy to wreck the bridge which the Emergency Fleet Corporation is attempting to throw from the Atlantic seaboard to the coast of France.

At the request of President Wilson, these carpenters have gone back to work; but the country will make a mistake if it now proceeds on the assumption that their incipient revolt was entirely due to the perverse belligerency of a few trade union leaders. The difficulty goes deeper than that. It is inherent in the planless confusion that has characterized the mobilization of our shipbuilding force, and especially in the anomalous position which the leaders of organized labor now occupy with respect to the maintenance of industrial peace not in the shipyards only, but also in all of our major war industries.

When the government launched its huge shipbuilding programme last summer, nobody knew how many men were actually engaged in existing shipyards, nobody had figured out how many would be needed in the new yards, or when they would be needed, or where. The various private companies and governmental agencies that undertook the building of ships began a wild advertising competition for men. Thousands of men responded; but out of every thousand who turned up at the shipyard gates only two or three score were hired. Moreover, no reasonably adequate provision was made, in laying out the new plants, to house and feed even those who were immediately needed. Thousands of men who came to the yards in response to patriotic appeals found themselves adrift in city slums, at the mercy of profiteering landlords, or without any lodging whatever short of police station floors. What should have been a carefully selected and compactly mobilized industrial army was converted into a demoralized mob of jobless and homeless men. Even now, many of the largest new yards are not ready to absorb the available labor; in spite of the clamorous appeals for shipbuilding volunteers, the immediate danger of a serious unemployment problem in certain large shipbuilding centres is actually more acute than the danger of a labor shortage.

Such bungling lack of prevision is responsible for much labor unrest. And the situation is aggravated by the anomalous position of the trade union leaders. Under their agreement with the Navy and the Emergency Fleet Corporation, these leaders have pledged themselves to maintain industrial peace in the shipyards. But what they were really induced to do when they entered this agreement was to sign a blank check against an unknown bank account. Under their pledge, they are made responsible for the good and patriotic behavior of men in whose selection they have had no officially recognized part and over whom they exercise a purely hypothetical authority. Instead of calling upon the unions to supply them with men, employers go into the open market and as often as not actually

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

discriminate against trade union members. There are plants that spend large sums of money for detectives to spot trade union applicants for work and turn them away.

In the ordinary course of events, disputes arise between the managements and their men over questions of hours, wages, conditions of employment. Then, after production has been interrupted, the Shipbuilding Adjustment Board steps in and calls upon the trade union leaders to negotiate for the men and, irrespective of their previous union or non-union standing, to bind them to accept the Board's decision as final. Whereupon the trade union executives become responsible, in the eyes of the public, for the future conduct of men, many of whom got their jobs for the precise reason that they were non-union men.

This is undoubtedly one of the substantial reasons why the president of the Carpenters' Brotherhood has so stubbornly held out for the closed shop. One can readily imagine him saying: "If I am to be responsible for the conduct of these men, I want to know in advance that they are to be members of my organization and subject to the discipline of the executive board of my union. I cannot honestly assume responsibility for men over whom I have no control."

But the closed shop, which has enabled the executives of the coal miners' union and the railroad brotherhoods to render exceptional service to the nation, is not indispensable to the effective fulfilment of their pledges by the trade union leaders. Organized labor, both through Secretary Wilson of the Department of Labor and through Mr. Gompers, has wisely waived the closed shop in industries where it did not exist before the war. In the face of this understanding, the unions have no moral right to force the closed shop issue now. But what they have a right to demand, and what they should have demanded from the beginning, is the preferential union shop. That is, they should demand that employers holding war contracts, and especially shipbuilding employers, should turn in the first instance to the unions for their labor and should go into the open market only when the unions are unable to supply them with reasonably competent men. Moreover, instead of fostering hostility to the unions, employers should be required to urge upon all employees the moral duty of supporting the unions of their respective trades. The present negative policy of the government, in which the unions have tamely acquiesced, is actually provocative of friction and a brake upon maximum output.

A strike occurs. The Shipbuilding Adjustment Board goes to straighten out the trouble. It finds that the employers refuse to deal with the trade union leaders. Nevertheless, it turns to these leaders and asks them, in the name of patriotism, to sign an agreement binding the men over to keep the peace. On the other hand, it turns to the employers and asks them, not to accept the frank cooperation of the trade union leaders in the organization and discipline of the working force, but merely to refrain from discriminating against employees or applicants for work because of their trade union membership. This negative policy tends to stir up competition between the management and the unions for the allegiance of the workers, and, instead of harmony and aggressively cordial cooperation, establishes an unhealthy and instable truce.

Through the appointment of Mr. Gompers to the National Advisory Commission, through the creation of joint adjustment boards to supervise employment conditions in the major war industries, through President Wilson's address to the convention of the American Federation of Labor at Buffalo, and in many other less conspicuous ways, the government has expressed its sense of dependence upon the goodwill and loyalty of organized labor in the effective prosecution of the war. Yet when it comes to the recognition of the right of the unions to direct participation in the initial organization of the labor force in the war industries, the government continues to yield to the current prejudice against organized labor among a certain group of employers, holds labor leaders at arm's length, and while charming them with honied words treats them with essential distrust and suspicion. Until this defect in our present labor policy is remedied by the adoption in principle of the preferential union shop idea, organized labor will periodically be subjected to drumfire criticism for interruptions of production which the trade union leaders are powerless to avert.

The New
REPUBLIC
A Journal of Opinion

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHT, 1917, IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA BY THE REPUBLIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC., 421 WEST TWENTY-FIRST STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y. HERBERT CROLY, PRESIDENT, ROBERT HALLOWELL, TREASURER.

EDITORS

HERBERT CROLY FRANCIS HACKETT
PHILIP LITTELL ALVIN JOHNSON
GEORGE SOULE—Assistant Editor
CHARLES MERZ, Washington Representative

YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION FIFTY-TWO ISSUES, FOUR DOLLARS IN ADVANCE. SINGLE COPIES TEN CENTS. CANADIAN SUBSCRIPTION FOUR DOLLARS AND FIFTY CENTS PER YEAR IN ADVANCE. FOREIGN SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR COUNTRIES IN THE POSTAL UNION, FIVE DOLLARS PER YEAR IN ADVANCE: REMITTANCE TO BE MADE BY INTERNATIONAL POSTAL MONEY ORDER.

ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MATTER, NOVEMBER 6, 1914, AT THE POST OFFICE AT NEW YORK, N. Y., UNDER THE ACT OF MARCH 3, 1879.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Soil of France

FRANCE has produced only forty-five per cent of her 1917 wheat crop—every American, thanks to Herbert Hoover, knows this significant fact. Yet who on the western side of the Atlantic thinks of the ruin that war has brought her in agricultural terms? It is the destruction of noble historic monuments like the Cathedral at Rheims and the Château of Coucy, of ancient towns like Arras, of beautiful little gray villages like Tracy-le-Val, that most stir us to sympathy: our first instinct is to give money for rebuilding. Americans actually in France, closer to brutal facts, come back from visits to the liberated regions preoccupied by the human side of the reconstruction problem; aesthetics are eliminated, permanent rebuilding is seen to be both out of the question and beside the point at present. Let us, they say, provide a roof, be it only of tarred paper; a well, be it only of muddy water; a bed, a stove, a pair of boots, a few essential articles of diet, for the returning population, and send doctors and nurses to cure the ills due to the under-feeding and the terrors of the last three years.

But why is each individual of the population so determined to return to the spot, the exact spot, where he has always lived, even though only a few charred bricks, a few seared stumps of trees, and only the memory of children remain? Simply because the *land* is there. Because France is a nation of small farmers. Because the peasant is her average citizen. Divided and sub-divided by the law of equal inheritance since the days of Napoleon, each little French field has become the centre of some laborious life. It is the sum total of these sturdy lives, drawing their courage, their faith, almost their breath from the sum of these meticulously cherished, tilled and tended fields that has been the great military reserve force of France in this war: two million five hundred thousand men at the lowest estimate were taken from the land by mobilization. To get the full import of these figures is to realize that the rehabilitation of the French soil is both an immediate and an ultimate problem: immediate, given the Allied shipping difficulties and the food shortage; ultimate, in that it should be the basis of any fundamental reconstruction programme. To this American aid in northern France, if it is to be something more than a poultice, should be made subsidiary.

Germany still occupies two million hectares of the richest wheat fields of France, land which formerly produced from thirty to thirty-five quintals per hectare. Approximately one hundred and thirty thousand hectares of the same quality, evacuated at the time of the spring sowing in 1917, could not be made to bear even a fair autumn crop owing to local conditions: the lamentable state of the soil itself; the systematic destruction by the enemy of villages, farms, barns, agricultural machinery; the pollution of wells, and the deportation behind the enemy lines of all the male population between sixteen and sixty, and of practically all women between the same ages save when they had children or old people dependent upon them.

This is the dramatic side of the agricultural situation. But agricultural loss is not confined to northern France. The very high level of intensive productivity of the soil in general was everywhere due to two factors which war has largely eliminated: human labor and chemical fertilization. Indeed the spectacular features of agricultural destruction in the departments evacuated last spring —gaping shell holes, crumbling trenches, barbed wire trailing like some rusty snake across the fields, even the fruit trees cut down to the level of the soil —look less sinister to the French eye than the miles and miles, the thousands and thousands of acres of rich wheat and beet sugar land untouched by fire and sword, yet grown waist-high with thistles, brambles and every other sort of pestilential weed; the apple trees full of great bunches of mistletoe. Before the war a French farmer was haled into court by his neighbors and fined for allowing thistles in his field and mistletoe in his orchard— remember this and you will get an echo of the tragic resonance that the phrase "terres abandonnées" has in the French heart.

So far as their material and physical means allow, the women and children, the old men, the men unfit for military service, have valiantly kept up agricultural work outside of the war zone; the peaceful face of France wears a deceptive air of tranquil productivity. But, in fact, fallow fields, deteriorated land, farms up for sale because the women are worn out and the owners discouraged or killed, increasingly abound. Besides the elementary problem of labor and fertilization, farm animals were everywhere requisitioned by the armies and, partly owing to the scarcity of grain and hay, have been raised in decreasing numbers: according to official figures, there were in 1917 two million less cattle, one million less horses, four million less sheep, three million less pigs than in 1913. All these elements must be taken into account in understanding the following comparative table of the cereal production of France in 1913 and 1917:

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

	1913.		1917.	
	Surface cultivated.	Production.	Surface cultivated.	Production.
	Hectares.	Quintals.	Hectares.	Quintals.
Wheat	6,542,230	86,919,050	4,224,450	39,231,410
Wheat and rye planted together	123,050	1,490,640	91,610	878,850
Rye	1,175,710	12,714,750	810,270	6,987,700
Barley	760,205	10,437,600	723,930	8,612,610
Oats	3,979,270	51,826,010	3,118,560	34,462,570

During the first years of the war the French government devoted its whole attention to the importation of wheat for national consumption; but in face of the submarine, the equalization of the rate of exchange, the continuation of the war, it became evident that a quintal of French wheat was cheaper even at 50 francs than a quintal of foreign wheat, and measures were taken to develop cultivation and control distribution. In 1916 the Prefects requisitioned the wheat harvest at 33 francs per quintal; in 1917 they supplied the flour mills at 50 francs per quintal, commerce in seed wheat remaining generally free. For 1918, largely due to the Paris Allied Conference in December, a wheat campaign, similar to the munition campaign of an earlier stage of the war, is projected and bread cards are already functioning in Paris and other parts of France.

Owing to the new restrictions, wheat which had been intended for consumption will now be used for seed; the government has a stock which is delivered to farmers on request. In the liberated region, formerly vital from an agricultural standpoint, as has been pointed out, but still under the jurisdiction of the army, and therefore stripped of all normal facilities of transport and supply, the prefects and those highly important personages in the peasant life of France, the local directeurs d'agriculture, have by herculean efforts accumulated sufficient stocks of farm animals and agricultural implements to supply rehabilitated farmers, the price to be eventually deducted from their "dommages de guerre." Many French charitable societies and, to a certain extent, the American Red Cross have also provided such farmers with these secondary needs, and the army itself has established shops for the recuperation of damaged machinery and instruments which it distributes to villages and cooperatives. But the primary needs, labor and fertilizer, remain present both in and out of the war zone.

Manure was formerly used to supplement chemical fertilizer on French farms; now it is practically non-existent save in the war zone where animals are concentrated and transportation is difficult. The problem of chemical fertilizer is largely one of shipping, for most of the products used are either in their raw or finished state imported. In 1913 France used, in round numbers, 2,000,000 (metric) tons of superphosphate and 530,000 tons of dephosphorization scoria, 750,000 tons of sulphate of ammonia, 300,000 tons of nitrate of soda, and 90,000 tons of potash fertilizers. According to a report of the State Bureau created in January of last year to organize the home production of such fertilizers only 180,000 of the 800,000 tons of superphosphates, 50,000 to 60,000 tons of the 300,000 tons of scoria, 22,000 of the 45,000 tons of sulphate of ammonia needed for the 1917 autumn dressings, only 50,000 of the 90,000 tons of potash fertilizers needed for the year 1918 could be produced in France. Nitrate of soda is entirely imported from Chile; all present stocks have been requisitioned and will be reserved for cereals and beet sugar. The state has not taken over production, but has endeavored to stimulate and facilitate it, to obtain uniform prices, eliminate the middleman, and ensure fair distribution. But the tonnage situation makes results far from commensurate with needs. Are the Allied Shipping Boards giving the subject full consideration?

Labor is, however, the crux of the agricultural difficulties. The French government, realizing this, last year released from military service for agricultural work 274,130 soldiers of the older classes, of which 193,274 were proprietors and 80,856 farm laborers. Besides this, 770 Indo-Chinese, 4,500 Tunisians, 740 Russians, 2,100 interned civilians and 45,409 prisoners of war have been assigned to agriculture. Temporary agricultural leaves have also been granted French farmers, which amount to perhaps 30,000 more "hands" a year. A total of 357,680. Note that the liberated region cannot profit largely by these new elements for the men of territorial age—not mobilized the first months of the war and therefore now civilian prisoners in Germany—are not available, and the labor of prisoners cannot be used within thirty kilometres of the front. By way of compensation, the army has itself organized an agricultural service which cultivates the area just behind the lines for military consumption, lends soldiers and horses en repos sporadically, and provides regular teams of farmers plucked out of their regiments to cooperate with villages and agricultural and reconstruction societies. But the military figure, whatever it is, when added to the 357,680 above mentioned is still but a drop in the bucket—the bucket that yawns for two and a half millions.

Nothing like these former numbers, as French agricultural experts plainly saw, would be restored to the land with peace; a drastic change in the individualistic methods of the past was obviously

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

necessary in agriculture as it has been in industry. And indeed, under the guise of the benevolent state socialism of wartime, the first steps in a real revolution have already been taken. To begin with, tractor ploughs have been introduced. A special emergency service of the Ministry of Agriculture was founded with a budget of 30,000,000 francs in the spring of 1917 to demonstrate their use. Organized in batteries of ten tractors, with a personnel recruited from the young, the old, the réformés, and under military discipline, they had by December, 1917, with only a small number of tractors (343 October 1st, 1917) reclaimed 25,000 hectares, 16,000 of which were in the liberated region. A hectare of such land is expected to bear about 10 quintals of wheat under present conditions; and a man consumes 2 quintals per year. The service may be supposed, therefore, to have provided food for 125,000 people. It estimates that there are 200,000 more hectares in the liberated region which, by the use of 2,000 tractors, could be brought under cultivation at once; it asks for 3,000 to 4,000 new tractors in all by October, 1918. America is supplying many; 1,500 have recently been ordered through the good offices of M. Tardieu. French industry, for obvious reasons, is being urged to compete. At present there are only 1,575 tractors in France belonging to individuals, to groups or to state, yet the problem of how to obtain a sufficient experienced personnel is already pressing.

The propaganda has been immensely assisted in the liberated region, by the simultaneous foundation of cooperatives of agricultural production. Given the psychology of the French peasant, and the sub-division of his land, nothing short of the breakdown of barriers both material and moral, could have led him to accept mechanical instead of human energy, and to associate himself with his neighbor. But the individual, with his poor human arms, is lost in the vast desolation of the Somme. A plough which can sweep to the horizon line, ignoring weeds and boundaries both, appeals here at last to the French imagination. The tractor service offered help to "collectivities," offered to plough the pooled land of a group of peasants at a reasonable price, to cede the tractor afterwards on easy terms; the army offered to supply teams of horses and workmen to complete the labor. The State offered loans at one per cent. A Mission of the Ministry of Agriculture has thus succeeded in founding some ninety cooperative societies in eight months, which represent about 40,000 hectares of the best land of France. But, granting the movement is far more successful in 1918, where will the labor force to supplement the work of these tired women, these old men on the pooled farms come from, when the army inevitably "moves on"?

The ultimate agricultural problem, particularly in relation to the liberated region, will be more fully discussed in a second article. The zone of the interior, less fertile in the past but now in better condition, is equally important at present, and under the new wheat regime it is being as carefully studied as the war zone. Two hundred and seventy tractors are already at work there and soon there will be 600. An inventory of "abandoned" land is being made by the mayors throughout France and it is expected that the new "Departmental Committees for Agricultural Action" will be given power to cultivate all land, and force recalcitrant owners to cooperate. M. Compere-Morel, a Socialist Deputy, recently appointed Wheat Commissioner, has just announced a gain of 324,724 hectares over January of last year in wheat land actually planted—which should mean an increased production of 3,247,500 quintals—and a farther gain of 300,000 hectares prepared for the spring planting.

Every bushel of wheat raised here is so much shipping space saved for American soldiers and munitions. Therefore America has a military as well as a sympathetic stake in the agricultural condition of France and our government and people, with all the brain, energy and wealth at their disposal, are in duty bound to help the French government and people push their constructive agricultural programme. The British army is this year undertaking to raise oats and hay on a very large scale along its entire front. The American army has other work on hand. Is it then our part to send machines? "Yes, and *quickly*," says Compere-Morel; not only the tractors ordered but also the 40,000 (cubic) tons of threshers, binders, etc. also ordered and promised "during the year 1918." If these last are not sent this spring they cannot be put together in time for the harvest. And the gain in acreage will be lost again. Can we in addition provide transport for nitrate of soda? Can we help solve the central problem of labor? The leaders of the cooperative movement suggest that even one or two thousand American farmer-volunteers, above conscription age but militarized, would be invaluable in the liberated region, doing for the land what our engineers are doing for the railways, until the American army is ready for the trenches, and can release French soldier-farmers for their own agricultural work.

But machines, farmers, fertilizer also mean shipping space; immediately we run our heads against a wall. Only the Shipping Board, the Food Administrator and the General Staff have competence to work out this complex sum in military arithmetic. Let us, the general public, ask ourselves, however,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

whether the French and the American Agricultural Departments are cooperating to the fullest extent? Whether the American Red Cross whose beneficent back is already straining to great burdens should not consider agriculture a basic part of its reconstruction work? So far it has done no more than supply instruments and give money for replanting fruit trees. Yet expert agricultural aid is quite as essential to the civil population of France as expert medical and social aid. The increasing need for child welfare and tuberculosis work will increasingly grow out of the more basic need to save the farms from abandonment and the farmers' wives from complete exhaustion. Drastic and creative action by America should not be delayed. For in these well beloved fields of France the rumor of another German offensive is already coming to us, simultaneously with the introduction of bread cards, and the desperately soft breath of another spring that—in spite of all efforts—will not fulfil its promise.

ELIZABETH SHEPLEY SERGEANT.

Rembrandt's Etchings in the Public Library

AS I stood looking round at the Rembrandts in the public library, I felt as though I were in a world of his creation. The world was richly varied and singularly real. It did not get its character from some peculiar mood, some individual flavor or personal trick of method, but it was actually there to be discovered, item by item, as so many particular things that could be found and dwelt with. This kind of thing happens very rarely and a comparison of Rembrandt with some other well known etchers may serve to put in evidence his distinction.

If, for instance, one recalls the work of Whistler, the etcher, one brings to mind an art of moods and space, often of spaciousness, exquisitely punctuated with delicate detail, and this so perfectly adjusted to the requirements of the space as happily to lose, in its perfect subordination to the whole, its character as detail. In the earlier etchings, of the Thames for example, there is at times such an excess in this detail as in part to lose unity and space and mood, but the defect is entirely overcome in the typical later work, where nothing is retained that might make the sum of the parts less than a genuine whole. So it is in the views of Venice and the later English and continental things. Rivas, palace and lagoons are presented, not for their own sakes as specific objects, but only to give substance to the delicate Whistlerian vision, to give occasion for an artist's ecstatic poise and mastery of a positively characterized, well spaced world.

Seymour Haden gives us something radically different, for whereas to Whistler the specific object is indifferent, though its appealing quality is all-important, to Haden the object is everything and the expression is merely the momentary aspect of the object. Most of Haden's etchings insist upon a certain locality at a particular moment, and with him we visit Kensington Gardens, Fulham or Chelsea, we walk up the driveway of Mytton Hall, bask in the rich serenity of Sunsets in Ireland or on the Thames, or take our pleasure on the Towing Path or in the Water Meadow. The composition is always adequate as a well chosen view; one could not want a better guide. A group of Haden etchings is like the reminiscence of a well spent day in honest companionship with nature.

The change to Meryon is a sudden one. Here nothing is quite what it seems, although one cannot say that something lies behind what is presented. There is not in the least the effect of a mere facade, or of a curtain that conceals an inner scene. There is rather the saturation of the mere building or the street in a wealth of meanings, sinister, as in the Rue des Mauvais Garçons or the Morgue, ironic as the Stryge or the great empty Gallery of Notre Dame, loftily remote like the Abside, or crowded with the sense of life within and beyond, as in the Pont Neuf or the Entrance to La Rue de la Tixeranderie. It would, of course, be absurd to insist on these specific interpretations. Each one to whom these etchings speak will find his own meanings and doubtless different meanings at different times, but it will be hard for any one to escape from the sense of something more than what is evident, even if one has no inclination to define it. In Meryon the overtones are inexorable, and they supply a poignant reinterpretation of familiar scenes.

Rembrandt is utterly unlike all the men that I have mentioned, and what he has achieved, although not inclusive of all that they have done, is something infinitely richer. He has not like Whistler flashed before our eyes scenes of cunningly wrought spaces, nor has he like Haden taken us out to view the country-side, nor like the profounder Meryon has he soaked the familiar in the colors of mystery, but he has taken amply and fully into his deep-souled vision all that he found about him, and he has re-created it again as a coherent world. When one is wearied with Whistlerian arrangements one can turn to Rembrandt's landscapes which are beyond arrangement, when one is bored by Haden's personally-conducted commonplace one can turn to Rembrandt's Landscape with a Ruined Tower or many another and get a thing's

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

reality instead of something that revives a real thing elsewhere, and when the mystery of Meryon's mad insistence makes us at times somewhat impatient of unreason, the hearty sanity of Rembrandt's human contact restores us to the world of normal emotions. Rembrandt is profoundly and essentially a classic, one of those rare men whose normality is great enough to make the unstressed commonplace poignant, and whose flights into the realm of mystery do not pull their feet off from the ground. In etching and drawing Rembrandt found his most unequivocal media, his instruments of most direct and perhaps of most successful expression. They give occasion for an extended deployment of his vital powers and show quite fairly the range of his spiritual and imaginative legacy.

Indubitably the visible world existed for Rembrandt, but it did not exist for him as an essentially indifferent world to be looked upon for the beholder's amusement, nor was he typically a moralist for whom things get their meaning from their purposes. He was interested in a thing's meaning, but for him that meaning was intrinsic, which is the same thing as to say that it was the thing's character. A comparison of Rembrandt's portrait drawing and etching with that of Vandyke will bring out some of his distinctive characteristics.

Vandyke's etched portraits, and this is even more true of the drawings for them, seem moulded on the model. This does not mean of course, that every bit of modeling in an actual model is reproduced, but rather that there is a general simplification of the surfaces so that the result is a closer approximation to a billiard ball, for example, sufficiently complete everywhere and specifically expressive nowhere. The artist has reproduced something, but he has said next to nothing. At most he has affirmed his own dexterity and a certain fondness for exquisite sufficiency. Now just as to the plain man a dog at a bench show is dog all over but to the expert he has points, so it is with personalities. The man with a liberal, live perception of character makes distinctions, and in his representations gives to those perceived distinctions, a coordinated personal reality. He does not limit his perception to just one trait or two so as to produce a caricature, nor does he extend it so liberally as to see nothing in particular. He finds an individual in the model and, if he has the gift for putting upon paper or on copper the necessary marks, can make him live forever. Rembrandt was rarely gifted with the vision of significance in persons, and saw it equally in the model and in his bodied-forth imaginings, his re-created personages are as alive as those of Vandyke and infinitely more personal. They add to the circle of one's intimates whereas Vandyke adds only to the circle of one's acquaintances.

In Rembrandt's landscapes we find a similar quality. In most cases, and I think in all the best, the thing is seen quite simply.

There is no Turnerian picturesque, no Whistlerian dainty posturing and finicky selection, no stately balance as in Waterloo and other seventeenth century men. A clump of trees, a bit of canal or road, some fields with farm houses or an old tower, generally suffice to make secure, pictorial immortality. Rembrandt may or may not have copied accurately the thing he had before him. I do not know but I see no reason to suppose that he proceeded otherwise with landscape than he did with portraiture, that is he felt the thing in a certain way and had the artist's intuition which, developed through practice, enabled him to find the lines and spots that made the drawing say what he intended.

The selection of particular features in the landscape, to which commentators often given exaggerated importance, is really a very subordinate matter. They say, and it is almost a commonplace of aesthetics, that the function of the artist is selection, that he must not put down everything in a scene but must select what is appropriate. Of course he must do this, but, in the obvious sense of a selection of objects, this gets us but a very little way. The important selection is a much more delicate thing and is not conscious selection at all. It is like the choice of words when we are speaking where it is evidence of weakness if we must stop to choose one word or another. And, even in the cases where we have used the wrong word and choose a substitute, the word that we select for substitution is taken rather as the result of an impulse to satisfy a specific demand, than because we make a choice. The artist under certain conditions of attention, simply feels a call from the object which, as it were, insists on realization; he feels its individuality as the thing's living pulse to which he answers by attempting to re-create it, giving his personal responsive rhythm as the thing's interpretation. Artists like Whistler and Meryon have a limited responsiveness. Things must meet them half way or they reject them. Haden is more generously receptive but his capacity for re-creation is slight. Rembrandt however asks but little though in return he gives so much. A bit of nature means to him, though he employs no lofty phrases, the central core of life, and in the simplest way he validates his feelings. And such is the truth of art.

There are great reaches in the world of Rembrandt's etchings that I have not touched upon. From the great wealth of possible harvest, a handful of impressions is the moment's garner.

LEO STEIN.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Twilight of Natural Rights

It is to be noted, then, although it may be a tedious truism, that the institutions of today—the present accepted scheme of life—do not entirely fit the situation of today. At the same time, men's present habits of thought tend to persist indefinitely, except as circumstances enforce a change.—(Professor Thorstein Veblen in The Theory of the Leisure Class.)

ON a superficial examination of current phenomena it might appear that the character of human life in this world has been altered for generations, perhaps given a direction throughout all coming time different from the one it would normally have followed, in order that a not inevitable war, lasting four or five years, might be brought to a desired conclusion. It is a commonplace that the statesmen of 1914 neither planned nor foresaw the remarkable series of social changes for which their inability to keep the peace prepared the way. In going to war they had immediate practical objects, having nothing to do with the transformation of human society. As the war proceeded, immediate, practical steps, such as the socialization of industry, were necessary, and they took them, perhaps with some perception of revolutionary after-effects, but not for the purpose of producing those effects. Most of them, no doubt, would still reject as heresy the insinuation that the effects of the hoped-for victory will ultimately turn out to be of less importance than the effects of the steps taken to gain victory. None of the official or orthodox animadversions on the subject of the war contain any but the faintest indications of a realization that the Europe which went to war is not, either in social structure or in habits of thought, the Europe which is now fighting. The language and avowed aims of governments remain substantially the same, while the current of common life has been permanently altered. There is still much talk in terms of a status quo, by which the conditions for peace may be measured, though that status quo, with all its landmarks, has sunk like a lost Atlantis beneath an ocean of tumultuous change.

The important fact about civilization at the present moment is, not that there is a world war going on, but that civilization itself is passing with tremendous momentum into an entirely new phase, and that men's ways of thinking are changing more rapidly than at any other time in history. It is only half, or quarter, of the truth, that lies within the immediate incidents of the war. Without its profound causes, its remote results, and the concomitant (and perhaps more far-influencing) forces, the war is an accident, no more logical than falling down stairs, and not necessarily any more a part of the eternal scheme of things. If we keep within the circle of war propaganda, pro and con, we are confronted with the Hobson's choice between explaining what has happened by blind chance, in which case we must conclude that human society is the sport of the elements and beyond hope, or by the intervention of an exterior Power, acting in such as way as to prevent a given cause from having its natural effect, or to produce a given effect without its natural cause. As the latter supposition is not seriously entertained in this generation, we must either resign ourselves to hopeless pessimism, or search beneath the obvious incidents of the time for evidence of consistent and controlling forces.

Traces of such evidence are to be found in the very readiness with which the complicated social readjustments of the past three years have been received by the masses of those affected. It is as though motives and principles on which civilization had unconsciously been acting for a long time had come to the surface. Necessity alone will not explain this acquiescence; it has been too unquestioning, almost too cheerful. Necessity may be a compelling master, but without more preparation than appears upon the records it would not have reconciled England and America to the current restrictions upon individual liberty, the current extension of the powers of government, the current substitution of the mechanical bias for the judicial and political bias, in short, to the current repeal of natural rights, if their civilization had actually rested upon the principles on which it was supposed to rest. If we had been wedded to natural rights it would not have been possible to abolish them by executive fiat; Germany would have won the war first.

The bulk of our society was not, in fact, wedded to them. For decades the gap between the habits of mind nominally governing the nations and those which prevailed among a large and increasingly numerous section of the Anglo-Saxon populations had been widening. The ostensible public opinion of the United States and the British Empire, as reflected in the press, and in the declarations, policies and laws of governments, was not the major public opinion, not the true public opinion. Had the true public opinion been articulate the social revolution which the war is accomplishing would now appear, not as an abrupt leap into the dark, but as the natural outgrowth of existing conditions

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and existing ways of thinking. The old ideas had been growing obnoxious, or beginning to seem imbecilic, to more people than were dreamt of by the lawyers or the judges. The wisdom of the fathers of 1787 was still being confidently relied upon by the political parties and still furnishing the text for the semi-legislative activities of the federal Supreme Court (it still is, in fact, as late decisions show), long after the masses of the people had grown out of sympathy, even of toleration, with it.

The newer aspirations of democracy, which are founded in the experiences of the day's work rather than in the enthusiasms of philosophers, are well exemplified in the history of the labor unions, particularly in Great Britain. Sidney Webb again and again emphasizes the inability of the British middle classes, which are the especial guardians of natural rights and laissez faire, to comprehend the axioms of the working class. It was as though the different classes belonged to different worlds or different centuries, as perhaps they did.

In the British trade unions, where the most important decisions of working class lives were reached, governmental ideals largely alien to those of existing national governments were growing up throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century. While English and American courts were upholding "the perfect liberty of every individual to dispose of his time and his labor in the way, and on the terms, which he may judge most conducive to his own interest" millions of working men were deliberately sacrificing this liberty for the sake of what they felt to be a more tangible freedom and a truer democracy. "The girls of a London jam factory," said the Webbs, a few years ago, "are still puzzled as to why the government should compel their employer to provide them with costly sanitary appliances and yet permit him to go on paying wages quite inadequate for their healthy subsistence." The middle-class gentlemen who made the law were quite as unable, no doubt, to comprehend the arguments advanced in favor of a minimum wage.

The point of view of the girls in the jam factory made itself felt, but with nowhere near complete clearness, in such reform movements as those which elevated Theodore Roosevelt and David Lloyd George to power. It had not succeeded, in 1914, in changing the accepted ideals of governments and courts. The crisis of 1914, when it struck Great Britain, did what years of argument could not have done: it showed the inadequacy of the middle-class individualism which still animated the government, and created an immediate demand for a statecraft that should be modern, scientific, practical, and democratic; that is to say, of the sort enforced by the exigencies of making a living upon the classes which had theretofore shared only indirectly in the government, and whose native ideas had not theretofore greatly influenced the government. What followed was not the spread of absolutely new ideas, or the spread of ideas formerly cherished only by the scholastic few, but rather a confession of ineptitude on the part of the old governing classes and a shifting of responsibility to those who are engaged directly in controlling the forces of nature, who think, to use Professor Veblen's words, in terms of "matter-of-fact cause and effect," and who have no restraining reverence for tradition or for any other intangible good.

War has become a matter-of-fact problem. Traditions and superstitions play an increasingly small part. Even as this struggle has gone on it has been easy to see that the sportsmanlike survival of chivalry and of chance have been relegated to the rear, along with the cavalry and the glittering uniforms. Victories are no longer won, they are manufactured, bringing into use, and into dominance, the mechanical mind. The mechanical mind has the trait, by which it is distinguished from the judicial and academic mind, of not being restrained by inherited inertia. A progress which involves daily trial-and-error, and the daily discarding of old ideas for new ones that work better, is natural to it. It now comes to the mastery in a world in which almost all institutions, church and state, systems of commerce and of industry, adjustments of labor and capital, are on trial as to their adaptation to the needs of the immediate hour. The use of the national wealth of manual skill and scientific knowledge to the full extent, that is, to the extent necessary to victory, survival and progress, is made possible only by putting out of power the men and ideas that have not been able to use it, and putting in those that are in sympathy with it and are able to use it. This is what is happening, or about to happen, in Great Britain and in the United States, government by principle is giving way to government by method. The work-shop laws by which the majority of civilized mankind have lived for a hundred years are finally becoming the laws of political control. Democracy is taking its lessons from the factory and discarding the tutorship of courts and parliaments.

War hastened this progress, but peace cannot undo it. In it lies the meaning of this latter stage of the struggle; in it is the explanation of the emergence of the democratic motive. It is the one factor in the present-day situation that justifies us in believing in the continued evolution of mankind toward a more perfect civilization.

R. L. DUFFUS.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Jerusalem and After

THE British campaign in Palestine has acquired fresh interest since Mr. Balfour announced that one of England's objects was to establish a national home there for the Jewish people. As a mere appendix to a not particularly brilliant campaign for the defense of Egypt or as a supplement to the war in Mesopotamia its interest was purely military. Now it has taken its place as one of the main political motives of the war. Elsewhere our plans for the future political happiness of the world in general and of our Allies in particular have not yet had their foundations laid, for the enemy is still in possession of the plots on which we want to build. The occupation of Jerusalem by the British army is the first piece of genuine political reconstruction that has taken place in the war. Mr. Balfour said nothing about the future British protectorate over Palestine and it may be that this will not be the political status that will most commend itself to the Allies. Perhaps the rescue of Palestine from the Turkish rule may connect itself later with the schemes for a league of peace. A league ought to have a capital and Palestine has so many holy places already that another place that is holy because it is the capital of peace may strike popular imagination as appropriate. Whatever their precise political status, the Jews in Palestine are sure to be a force making for peace. They will owe their existence as a nation to British arms seconded by international agreement, they will be drawn from nearly every country of the world, and they will have the strongest of all interests for not being drawn into the vortex of international rivalries and racial discords. If the league of peace is to have a capital it will clearly be at home in Palestine. These, however, are speculations. At present the British army holds little more of Palestine than the ancient kingdom of Judah, and a great deal of hard work is still to be done before we can be said to be in possession of Palestine.

When Napoleon invaded Palestine there were no railways, and small though his force was he felt himself justified in pushing rapidly on along the coast into the plain of Ezdraelon, for the nearest powerful Turkish army was at Damascus and he knew that it could not march south in time to worry his flanks. He fought his decisive battle with the Turks on Mount Tabor on the Nazareth range opposite Gilboa, where Saul was killed. But now the numerous railways of Palestine and especially the Hedjaz railway east of Jordan would make such strategy very hazardous. Napoleon could afford to leave Jerusalem alone; Allenby had to seize the plateau of Judea to protect his flank and he manoeuvred the Turks out of Jerusalem by cutting its communication with Nablous (Samaria). The failure of the Turkish attempt to recapture Jerusalem on Boxing Day enabled him to push seven or eight miles further north of Jerusalem along the Nablous road, but the whole of this country is exceedingly difficult, and if he has to press back the Turks mile by mile along these hills—the Mount Ephraim of the Bible—his progress is going to be very slow. Near the coast he is well across the Auja River which separates the plain of Sharon from the old Philistine plain and it may be that he will try to repeat his enveloping tactics which won the battle of Gaza, only this time on the opposite flank. Gaza was turned by Beersheba on his right flank, and the positions in Mount Ephraim may be turned by the plain of Sharon on his left flank up Wadye es Shair. That, however, remains to be seen.

There are two opposing schools of military thought in England about these operations in Palestine. One school holds that we had better sit down where we are and let the Turks attack if they will. The other school is all for pushing on, for continuing the pressure on the Turks while they are still weak, and for pegging out a claim to a Palestine roughly equivalent to the ancient Jewish patrimony. Judea which we now hold is for Jew and Christian alike the most sacred soil in Palestine, but it is not material out of which a modern state could be made. A Palestine confined to Judea would be a mere bastion work of Egypt; and if it is to become a state it should include Samaria, enough of Galilee to give it a good defensive frontier on the north and to put new settlers in possession "of the way of the sea," and as much territory east of Jordan (economically the most valuable part of Palestine) as can be had by arrangement with the Arabs. Whether General Allenby has enough troops to carry out this more ambitious plan may be doubted, but it is held by the "forwards" that if he has not he should be given them, that an offensive in Palestine need not make very great demands for reinforcements and might, if it achieved another victory like that of Gaza, lead to the complete break-up of Turkish rule south of the Taurus and to a revolt of the Arabs, and so convince the Turks of the hopelessness of the struggle that they would be willing to make peace with us on the basis of keeping Constantinople and Asia Minor. Such an offensive, it is argued, would combine very conveniently with a policy of defense in the west. It might conceivably end the war, but at any rate a year's respite from the slaughter on the west, especially if the Germans obliged by themselves attacking, would enable us to complete some very necessary

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

military reforms, to give more attention to the all-important problem of shipping, to await the full development of America's military strength and so to face a new offensive on the west next year with greater confidence. If Germany saw that the blow likely to fall then would be too heavy for her to bear, she would not await it, but would make peace before it fell on such terms as she could get. The argument that a comparatively small effort in the east might in this way win the war is therefore not fantastic and is gaining adherence every day in England. It is further supported by the consideration that such an ending of the war would find the work of reconstruction in the east well under way and would give the Jews a reasonably ample estate for their new home. If this ideal of the restoration of the Jews to Palestine is a great and worthy one it should not be executed in miniature and it deserves a wide and dignified frame.

There has been much discussion in England of the future constitution of the Jewish state, but obviously until the international status of Palestine is settled it is necessarily vague and incomplete. The point upon which English opinion is most insistent is on the necessity of friendly cooperation between the Jews and the Arabs. The suggestion which has been made of chartered company rule in Palestine is not liked, for it is thought that absentee finance would not only tend to be intolerant towards other races in Palestine but would obstruct the peaceful and democratic development of Jewry in Palestine. English opinion is particularly anxious for friendly relations to the Jews and the Arabs because the future of Palestine must have a profound effect on our position in the east. Englishmen who have thought about the military problems of this war are more concerned about the weakness of the English frontier, and they hope by the creation of a strong Palestine to continue a system of buffer states in front of India, which has always been one of the vital principles of our eastern policy. The old British alliance with Turkey which has been responsible for so much misery to the subject populations of this effete imperial power and incidentally for so much disgrace to ourselves (for our denunciations of Germany for the Armenian massacres during this war have a sting in their tail for sensitive and honest Englishmen) was a misapplication of the principle which will never be repeated. And that is why the project of a new Arabia is regarded with so much hopefulness by so many Englishmen who know the east, notably by Sir Mark Sykes, whose influence in the councils of the War Cabinet has been steadily growing within the last twelve months.

The Arab, largely because the main brunt of the Mongol invasion fell upon him, has made a sad mess of his old political splendor, but he has never lost his strain of liberalism and enlightenment. His friends believe that a period of inflorescence is again approaching for the Arab genius and wish to give a chance if they can take it for the ancient glories of the kalifs. Thus the new Arab power and the new Jewish Palestine present themselves as two aspects of the new eastern policy which is being reconstructed from the ruins of the old and bad policy maintaining the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. That being so, it becomes doubly important to the English mind that the Jews and the Arabs, with whom should be coupled perhaps the Armenians, should be on terms of close sympathy and friendship. They have a magnificent though very neglected estate to develop.

H. SIDEBOTHAM.

Instead of Revolution

The Food Administration—VI

"IF we in Britain," says the tentative programme of the British Labor party, "are to escape the decay of civilization itself, which the Japanese statesman foresees, we must ensure that what is presently to be built up is a new social order, based not on fighting but on fraternity—not on the competitive struggle for the means of bare life, but on deliberately planned cooperation in production and distribution for the benefit of all who participate by hand or brain." "Shall we," writes the American Engineering News Record, "by ignoring conditions that the merest numskull can appreciate, drift into anarchy? Laissez faire and 'last-ditch resistance' both lead to that end."

By the law which established it, the Food Administration goes out of existence the day the war is over. No matter how severe the food shortage may be, all public control over the manufacture and distribution of food products will cease. No longer will the packers' profits be limited. No longer will the United States Grain Corporation exist to stabilize the wheat market and prevent speculation. Mr. Hoover's carefully built structure of differentials will collapse. All cooperative agreements which rest on government control will

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

end. The entire food industry will be tossed back into the sea of competition.

Many interests believe they will like the result. And it will be easy for these interests so to manipulate public sentiment as to prevent the law from being changed. For the Food Administration is bound to arouse temporary unpopularity on every hand. Producers urge that they should have received higher prices. Distributors are restless under their first experience of profit control. The consumer suffers a temptation to attribute shortages and high prices to Mr. Hoover, forgetting or not believing that the shortage would have been greater and less humanely distributed, that prices would have been far higher, without government control. And Mr. Hoover himself, tired out with the strain of composing everyone's differences and trying to bring America's wasteful food system suddenly into something like order, would be glad to walk out of the big frame building at 19th and D Streets in Washington and burn it down.

It may happen. But if it does happen, certain other things will happen also. The world's stock of food, depleted to its lowest level, will for a long time remain low. Competition and speculation, released to gormandize at the world's need, will drive prices to the mountain tops. Flour will not stop at twenty-five dollars a barrel; it may go beyond fifty dollars. Wasteful distribution will again increase the differential between what the farmer receives and what the consumer has to pay. The returning armies, streaming into an overcrowded labor market, will meet a cost of living which reduces them to abject poverty. Large sections of the salaried and professional classes will be worse off than the day laborer. There may be strikes and riots without end; in short, the time will be ripe for a Trotzky and a seizure of power by a half-starved proletariat. And then, whether a revolution comes or not, the machinery of cooperation will have to be painfully built up all over again before anarchy can come to an end.

Some of the objections to the existing control are reasonable, it is true. The farmers say the prices for their products should not be limited unless the prices of the things they have to buy are limited. That is sound. The government has already succeeded in reaching an agreement with Mexico about the price of sisal for binder twine, which will reduce its cost. But why should not the government extend its control to the manufacture of farm implements? Why should not Mr. Hoover be empowered to buy and distribute feeds, in order to aid the stockgrowers? Why should not some public agency be authorized to extend sufficient financial aid to tenant farmers? Are not these measures preferable to prices of three or four dollars a bushel for wheat, and twenty-five dollars a barrel for flour, with resulting ripples of higher prices spreading indefinitely through wages to everything the government and the public buy?

Many consumers believe the economies in distribution are not sufficiently apparent in retail prices. They are right; why should not Congress give the Food Administration power to license and control retailers? Sugar prices do not seem so low as they might be. They could be lower, without any cost to the beet and cane producers, if the Food Administration could buy and sell sugar.

In short, the Food Administration's failures are measured by the narrowness of its scope, by the lack of extension of the principles it embodies to other fundamental products. In some respects it is a lame and partial government organ. There have been occasions when business men themselves —the wise majority of a given trade—have come to Mr. Hoover and asked him to establish permanent reforms in their business, reforms which could be enforced only through a universal practice which government control would guarantee. And Mr. Hoover has had to refuse because he could not assume the responsibility of so thoroughly reorganizing the trade custom that the sudden vanishing of government control at the arrival of peace would disrupt the business in question.

Before long the country must make up its mind to one or two alternatives. Either it must wipe out all that has been accomplished by public administration of business and take the consequences, or it must go into public administration thoroughly and permanently. It must broaden and perfect what the British Labor party so well calls "a deliberately planned cooperation in production and distribution for the benefit of all who participate." To many the latter alternative is inexpressibly disagreeable, and uncertain of success. It seems to mean government by a lifeless bureaucracy, an interminable array of fixed prices and wages that will devitalize economic processes, and an undue centralization of power at the mercy of red tape and political intrigue. But people who are disturbed by such fears are thinking in terms of government as we have known it, government conceived as a superimposed structure of checks and balances, resting on "natural rights" and static laws. They are not thinking of a type of government whose possibility such an organ as the Food Administration reveals to us.

Mr. Hoover is an engineer. His job has always been to accomplish an object, given certain conditions. One of his most tell-tale habits is his frequent use of the word "implement" as a transitive verb. To implement the packers is to adjust the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

packing business, internally and externally, so that it may be used to accomplish a certain result. To implement the docks means to use the docks as an efficient tool in shipping goods. The whole Food Administration was established for a purpose; its machinery is built and altered and realtered to work towards that end. It does not exist by and of itself. It has not made for itself a rigid constitution and a balanced series of powers. Its laws—the arrangements about prices and movements of products—are not decrees from on high or deductions from abstract principle; they are adjustments between interests which must cooperate in a given effort. Its method is not to sit above conflicting groups defending their rights and adjudicating among them, but to put itself at the head of the groups and lead them along a common path. It is functional government, and as such it cannot grow rigid and stale. Nobody it deals with would let it.

The purpose for which it happens to exist is closely associated with the winning of a war. But that does not mean that when the war is over no sufficiently compelling purpose for its work will remain. A long dormant people will have been startled into an understanding of the need for a real economic and social integration, an integration such as no crude specific like universal military service could possibly stimulate. Aside from any future change in methods of dividing wealth, everybody will need the economies in production and distribution which close cooperation and public control alone can bring about. Whether the packing houses and the elevators remain in their present hands, or become owned by the government, by the farmers, or by the workers in them, the task of such a body as the Food Administration will have to be done. For there will always remain interests grouped around the various instruments of production and distribution, whose processes and needs must be compared and adjusted. The permanent significance of Mr. Hoover's organization is that it has developed methods of accomplishing that comparison and adjustment, in subordination to the public interest as a whole.

The Food Administration is, in fact, the beginning of a nerve-plexus of our economic organism. Nothing it does leaves uninfluenced the daily life of millions of individuals. It gathers up the impulses from a thousand sources, and in turn harmonizes their action. It represents neither an autocratic and unitary state nor anarchic and independent individuals; but it gives a meaning and purpose both to the one and the many by establishing their functional interrelation. It offers a promise of a large factor in what the British Labor party demands: "In industry as well as in government, that equal freedom, that general consciousness of consent, and that widest possible participation in power, both economic and political, which is characteristic of democracy."

GEORGE SOULE.

CORRESPONDENCE

Coal Bins and Coal Boxes

SIR: There seems to be an impression on the part of newspaper writers and other social observers that coal for the city of New York is brought to the New Jersey side of the North River and then barged across to Manhattan. This is a serious misconception of the situation and one that has probably led to much confused thinking on the subject. Perhaps a concise statement of the real problem involved in this phase of fuel distribution in New York would not be amiss.

Practically all of the domestic coal consumed in the city is brought by the railroads to South Amboy, Perth Amboy, Port Reading, Port Elizabeth and Port Johnson, especially to the first three places named. When the coal reaches these terminals the duty of the railroads as carriers ceases. This means that the railroads have performed their contract when they have delivered the coal at places which are twenty miles or more from the city. Just suppose that the Pennsylvania Railroad should discharge its New York passengers at Elizabeth, New Jersey! Yet most of the coal is left at places on the Raritan Bay and Arthur Kill. How is it to reach the coal bins in the city?

At the terminals the coal is dumped into coal boxes, as Maine men have dubbed the ordinary coal barge. And a box it is, a rectangular wooden affair rather like a shoe box in shape. These boxes vary in size from boats with a carrying capacity of four hundred tons to boats which can carry from twelve hundred to fourteen hundred tons.

On every tide the loaded boats are made up into tows which sometimes consist of sixty boats, though the average tow contains about thirty-five boats. The only way to tow such a flotilla is to make up the tow in tiers, usually four boats to a tier. The variation in size above noted presents a serious difficulty in making up the tows, a difficulty which is met, but not without great loss of efficiency. After the tow is made up, powerful steamtugs bring it up to New York for distribution.

This arrangement is all very well for fine weather. But every winter Arthur Kill is filled with ice. Then what becomes of the coal boxes? The average coal barge is thirty feet wide so that each tier of the tow is about one hundred and twenty feet across. Imagine trying to force such a front as that through thick ice! Each box presents a square, blunt end to the ice-pack, and the ice cuts into the forward end of the boat and makes it leak. Hence when ice conditions become bad, as they have this winter, the only safe way to tow is to string the boats out one behind the other so that as the sharp-nosed tug smashes its way through the ice, the boats follow in the lane of open water thus formed.

To my personal knowledge many of the coal boxes, fully laden with coal, have been sunk by the ice cutting through their sides. At this time when we are crying for coal and when every pound of it ought to be conserved it is utter stupidity to rely upon a conveyance which has proved itself unfit for service. The coal has been at the terminals but it

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

could not be brought to New York largely because the coal box was unfit to carry it.

The simple remedy of bringing the coal to Jersey City cannot be applied because the Jersey City water front is needed for other purposes. The coal will continue to be handled from the distant points beyond Staten Island. The only way we can meet our coal situation is to provide a method of keeping a steady stream of boats in service.

The boats now in use are owned by Tom, Dick and Harry, and they show every possible variation in size and seaworthiness. The railroads have contemplated building suitable boats for this service, strong iron barges of uniform size, but owing to the hostility of the public and of the private boat owners their plans had to be abandoned. Nevertheless, if New York's coal bins are to be saved from famine, either the railroads must be permitted to supply suitable boats or the government will have to do so.

T. Catesby Jones.

New York City.

What to Do for Russia

SIR: A crisis in diplomacy is not improbably upon us. It may not come, but it is at least sufficiently likely to make it sure to have our national policy clear.

The advance of the Germans toward Petrograd and their insolent demands may well mean that some Russian government will make an appeal to the Entente powers. It may be the present Bolshevik government, although it is more likely to be a government founded on some national assembly or on a coalition of party leaders. Whatever it may be, we can well afford to recognize it, if the policy it puts forth is one that makes for the future safety of European civilization. As the Germans advance, some Russian government may well request the Entente to accept a peace based more nearly on the phrase, "No annexations and no indemnities" than the Entente has heretofore shown itself willing to accept. Germany and Austria want peace. The advance into Russia is not so much for food or material, or even for future influence, as in order to have positions to trade with. The sweeping demands now made on Russia by the German imperialists would be supported by the German people if they conceived themselves as fighting against Entente territorial demands. They would not be supported by the people or the Reichstag that had to choose between German imperialism and a drawn war with peace by agreement between equals. The question for us is, are we willing to make a fair trade, in the sense of a fair arrangement, or are we not?

One consideration must be kept distinctly to the fore. If we save Russia, Germany will have a great democratic people on the east, and it will be still more inevitable therefore that the march of democracy in Germany itself will be continuous. If we do not save Russia, we are relying on the very doubtful gamble of a victory in the west, so complete that we can make our own terms with Germany everywhere, including the east. If we lose that gamble, and Germany retains a thinly disguised control of many Russian provinces, it will be a control based on force, like the Czar's government, with the probability of Russian revolt, and therefore with the certainty that Germany will later feel another Slav menace, and a continuing need of vast armament.

The Entente has thrown away one opportunity after another of increasing the possibility of a peace that should not be a German victory, in any other sense than that it would not have been an Entente victory. If another opportunity comes, in the way I suggest as probable, and Entente diplomacy falls as far short as it has fallen heretofore, there is likely to be trouble in Italy, in France and in England. It will be said that my forecast is a mere guess, with the chances against it; but statesmanship consists in being ready ahead of time to seize any opportunity that may possibly present itself. At any rate, the classification that I suggest could do one good. It would increase Russian reluctance to submit to German imperialism; it would make the French, English and American peoples fight better; and it would cause the German people to be decidedly less united.

Norman Hapgood.

No Conservation in Cantonments?

SIR: Your paper exhibits such keen insight into our war needs I've been hoping to see you shed a little more light on the matter of food conservation. Why, for instance, are the women accused (as they were recently in startling headlines) of sinking two boatloads of Allied provisions by their (assumed) wastefulness in the homes, whereas there remains no official supervision of waste in our cantonments, on transports and in France of the food so conscientiously saved by civilians? The time is surely ripe for the public to demand that the war department use the same care and supervision of war food supplies as is required of the rest of us

I live in a cantonment town and hear on all sides growing complaints from the soldiers themselves as well as the citizens, of the amazing wastage and superabundance of food in the cantonments. For example they wish to know why, on meatless days in town, at the cantonments two and often three different kinds of meat are served at a meal, and other luxuries in like proportion. It is common knowledge that even a spirit of rivalry exists among the quartermasters at the different camps to see which shall provide the most luxuries for their men. Certainly the soldiers themselves would be the last to require such discrimination, as was shown recently by the published requests from the boys with Pershing that more restricted food rations be served them by the War Department.

Doesn't common sense suggest that supervision of food consumption is just as vital in one department of war service as another? And that such supervision would more than repay the outlay necessary to enforce it?

Then there is the question of milk. How can the world be saved for democracy when the lives of our infant democrats are jeopardized by the lack of it? Nothing takes the place of cow's milk for babies. A very large proportion of American babies depend upon it for existence. Yet no practical steps have been taken by the administration to conserve either the cows that provide the milk, or the price of the milk itself. It is common knowledge that the price of pure milk today can only be paid by the well-to-do. The babies of the middle and lower classes must starve or find inferior substitutes. In my town, for instance, the entire milk supply is practically controlled by a well known milk trust. The poorest grade—and it is indeed poor—costs 18 cents a quart, the best 20 cents, or 72 and 80 cents a gallon, whereas the farmers only are paid by them 45 cents a gallon straight.

Once in a while, in papers throughout the country, we see a protest against the prohibitive cost of milk, but noth-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing seems to be done about it. Surely our future democracy should not be jeopardized by crude negligence in conserving and regulating a product so necessary to its citizenship. The milk isn't vital to the lives of American soldiers, but it is to the lives of American babies, and it should hold as important a place in food conservation as wheat, sugar, pork and beef. Nor will it be a comforting thought to our soldiers in cantonment and trench to know that their babies are starving for want of milk in order that they may be over-supplied with beef.

J. A. M.

Jacksonville, Florida.

Patriotism and the Study of German

[Note: The following letter was written by Mr. P. P. Claxton, United States Commissioner of Education, in response to an inquiry as to the advisability of the further continuance of the teaching of German in high schools and colleges.]

I DO not think our present relations with the German empire should affect in any way the policy of the schools in the United States in regard to teaching the German language.

The United States is now at war with the imperial government of Germany and not with the German language or literature. The President has tried to make it plain to all the people that we are not at war with the people of Germany as a people, and that we have in our hearts no hatred or bitterness toward them. When the war is over we expect to be friends again and our commercial and political relations will be reestablished. Indeed we shall probably have much more intercourse with the German people then than ever before, as we shall have with most of the nations of the world. The great German republic may become one of the leading nations for the preservation of the peace of the world. For practical, industrial and commercial purposes we shall need a knowledge of the German language more than we have needed it in the past. We should remember also that there are many millions of German speaking people outside of Germany, and the number of such persons will probably increase rapidly after the war regardless of the way in which the war may end. Some years ago we were at war with Spain. And more recently we were almost at war with Mexico whose people speak the Spanish language. The need of a knowledge of the Spanish language for commercial and industrial uses has been greatly increased.

The culture value of the German language and literature and the writings of Lessing, Goethe, Schiller, and a host of other poets and of novelists, historians and essayists remain the same as they were before the war, and it is too great for us to lose out of our life, national and individual. The value of the scientific and technical writings of the German people will no doubt continue to increase. To rob ourselves of the ability to profit by them would be very foolish. The kinship between the English and the German languages is the same as it was before the war and the value of a knowledge of the history and philology of the German language for an understanding of English remains the same.

Last of all, we cannot as a people afford to put ourselves in the attitude of regarding as evil everything about any people with whom we may happen to be at war. We cannot afford to assume this attitude toward the German people simply because they happen now to be under the control of an autocratic militaristic government with purposes and aims that have brought us into conflict with it. The fewer hatreds and antagonisms that get themselves embodied in institutions and policies the better it will be for us when the days of peace return. We can easily see how this has been true of our times of war with England, Mexico and Spain, and among ourselves.

I sincerely hope that school officers and teachers everywhere will take the broad and sane view of this subject. To do so can, I believe in no way be interpreted as a lack of loyalty to the United States, nor can failure to do so in any way strengthen our position in the war or enable us to bring it to a successful end more quickly.

(Signed) P. P. CLAXTON.

The Secret Treaties

SIR: It is amazing that the most important diplomatic documents relating to the war hitherto published, the secret treaties of the Entente Powers given out by the Bolsheviki and printed in full in the New York Evening Post, should have received scarcely any attention in America.

Their painful interest lies not so much in the demonstration that the morality of the wolf pack is no monopoly of the "Hun" as in pointing out the exact road to an iniquitous and temporary peace that America should not travel. We are committed to see Alsace-Lorraine returned to France, but shall we endorse her demand in these treaties for a further accession of territory, purely German, and for tearing from Germany her Rhine provinces in addition, and forming them into an independent political entity? Shall we give Italy half the Austrian Empire, Albania, parts of Asia Minor and of the German African colonies and her share of the contemplated war indemnity? What shall we say to the cool partitioning not only of Turkey but of neutral Persia? What shall we say to the stipulations for excluding Germany's trade from China, not only without China's consent but without that of any other great power save Japan? Can we endorse Russia's demand that the Polish question be not made a subject of international agreement? Perhaps the depth of infamy is reached in the memorandum of the Russian government to the effect that as Rumania has been offered more territory than her services are worth as an inducement to take up arms, she must, after the war, be "exploited" by Russia and her "compulsory ties" with that nation strengthened. It is highly necessary that American opinion should say whether she will become a party to the partitioning and annexation of vast territories and to the racking and flaying of the central empires not only beyond all just demands for restitution and security but to the point of extreme danger for the future peace of the world.

In one other point American opinion should insist on informing itself: that is, on the internal condition of the German empire. At present we are dependent entirely on British editors, or on English contributions, like the excellent ones of Mr. Brailsford, to your and other American journals. But why are we not allowed to see the German papers and judge for ourselves? America should insist that the English government allow these papers to pass as freely to our country as to her own. To submit longer to be treated as minors is both humiliating and dangerous for the American people.

PRESERVED SMITH.

Poughkeepsie, New York.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

At the Capitol

What Happened to Wheat

AS Senator Vardaman sadly observed after listening to the debate on the Railroad bill, "War is the pregnant womb of perplexing problems which come forth with fearful fecundity." Congress seldom finds and leaves unsolved so many large problems in so short a time as during the two weeks of the railroad debate. But meanwhile Congress did not have any time for a more fearful and pressing problem than any of these, one that a few senators and representatives did something to create.

The wheat famine now upon us is partly due to the fact that farmers have been holding back the last of the 1917 crop. They were waiting to see what would happen to bills introduced by Senator Gore and others to raise the minimum price of wheat anywhere from $2.50 to $4.00 a bushel. None but the most tender-minded farmer will sell his wheat at a lower price, even in a burst of patriotism, so long as there is a chance of his being obliged to sell at a higher one. Congressmen may explain, to be sure, that the new price would have applied only to the 1918 crop. But there is no way to distinguish, by examination of the grain, one year's crop from another's.

The President had to intervene and establish the new price by proclamation. It would be simple to leave it at that, praising the President's firmness, denouncing Senator Gore for obstruction, politics, pro-Germanism, or any current heresy. Or if one were anti-administration and pro-Congress one could cite this as another example of executive usurpation. But simplicities do not illuminate the situation.

Senator Gore did not introduce his bill to aid the enemy. He did it because he believed that without it farmers would not get enough for their new wheat to insure a large crop. And back of that is a long story. Weeks ago reports began to drift into Washington that all through the country farmers were doubtful about their 1918 prospects. Labor, seed and machinery—all of them necessary in plenty for bumper crops, were scarce and high in price. Things were bad enough for the land-owning farmers, but the tenant farmers could not even borrow money, for they were up to their ears in debt on account of previous drouths, and had no security to offer.

It may be indiscreet to say that the Department of Agriculture would not listen to these rumors; but it certainly is true that the Department was intensely proud of its statistics, its scientific experiments, and its educational publicity. By these activities it was, according to the Lever bill, supposed to "stimulate production." (It did have a trifling fund with which to buy seed to be resold to farmers at cost, and also, be it noted, for cash.) Now many farmers would undoubtedly profit by education, but it so happened that what the farmers needed this spring was labor, seed, machinery and money. They were therefore not impressed by Secretary Houston's offerings of excellent statistics.

As for the Food Administration, it had no legal jurisdiction over the stimulation of production. It did have some price control, but obviously the most clumsy and damaging remedy for the farmers' ills was to promise them indefinitely higher prices.

Eventually the Federal Board of Farm Organizations submitted a memorial to the President asking for action. He replied by a public address to their annual meeting praising the Department of Agriculture. It is whispered that in this case, as in so many others, the President was so badly informed that he mistook a genuine movement for a political attack on a member of his official family. At any rate his address did not reassure the farmers.

The next week they sent a large delegation to Washington. After some difficulty they succeeded in interviewing the President, and presenting to him a still stronger statement of their troubles. Yet no action was taken. And then one more hasty group initiated an independent movement for a higher legal minimum price, and discharged their grievances before friendly senators and representatives. The Gore and other bills were the result.

The President's proclamation will probably kill the price bills in fact, if not by legal authority. But will it remove the issue which they dramatized? Is $2.20 a bushel high enough to insure maximum productivity, in the circumstances? It is no higher than the price agreed on for the 1917 crop. It could not be; otherwise the last of the 1917 crop could not be moved off the farms. But is it high enough for 1918? And if it is not high enough, what measures of relief are to be extended to the farmer?

Probably the agitation has stimulated the government to do all that can be done to relieve the labor shortage. But the prices of farm machinery are still uncontrolled, and the farmers who most need money still have no opportunity to borrow it.

What strikes the observer as most curious about the whole affair is that the fundamental issue has not been developed either by the administration or by Congress. It is true that the administration was dilatory and blind, and that Congress, acting as a court of appeal, forced the President's hand. But in neither quarter was the question of the best way to stimulate production discussed and brought to a conclusion.

A clear-headed statement by Mr. A. C. Townley, leader of the Farmers' Nonpartisan League, has put the matter concisely. There are two ways to stimulate production and finance it. One is to leave prices uncontrolled in a competitive and speculative market. The other is to adopt a consistent policy of price-control for all necessities, and accompany it with complementary financial aid from the government. The former method is wasteful and results in a per capita tax on every one's income. It would be impossible in times of great stress like the present. The latter method is feasible and should be adopted. It has been adopted by the Food Administration, so far as its legal powers permit, and it has been adopted by the farmers' government of North Dakota, so far as the limitations of state action permit.

Any form of democratic government which was adopted to gather up the specific troubles of the people and resolve them into general policies could not have escaped a decision between these alternatives. Congress, with its two-party membership, its separation from the executive, its multifarious committee system, has escaped it. The administration, with its uncoagulated departments, its lack of a central and responsible council, has escaped it.

G. S.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

After the Play

FREQUENTERS of Broadway, and of other regions as quaint and as remote from modern life, still talk, I am told, about the problem play. You don't know what they mean? That is either because you are lucky enough to have been young or unborn in the eighteen-nineties, or else because you have taught your memory the art of forgetting. Those of us who in 1892 were old enough to be playgoers, and whose memories are encumberingly retentive, can still recall the problem play and the controversies it started. Its opponents always said that the stage was not the place to discuss problems or else that all plays had been problem plays since time was. Its partisans insisted on its newness. And its label was new.

The peculiarity of the 1892 problem play lay in the contrast between the serious intentions of the problem playwrights and the queer artificiality of the problems they asked us to look at. Is it a good plan, on the whole, to leave your uncongenial wife in London and go travelling in Italy with another lady who happens to be a stump-speaking rebel? Is he a wise widower who marries several men's mistress and bets against his daughter's falling in love with one of his second wife's ex-lovers? Under what circumstances, if any, should a red-headed man with a wooden leg get engaged to his first wife's aunt? Ought an Arctic explorer who is growing bald and pantheistic to marry a deaf mute with a passion for acquiring authors' copies of the Bible?

Such, beheld through a fog of years, were the problems submitted to us in the early nineties. Today the problem in a problem play is simpler and concerns a greater number of human beings.

Hetherly, the young dramatist in Youth, which the Washington Square Players are giving at the Comedy, is troubled in body and mind by desire. He takes too serious, too self-respecting, too woman-respecting a view of sex to have anything to do with prostitutes. In him the effects of unsatisfied desire appear as readiness for love affairs touched with imagination, and unreadiness for any other kind. Being rather self-observant, he is perturbedly aware that his love is a dirigible wanderer. It can be pointed almost anywhere and fixed nowhere. He is afraid he shall never be content to love one woman only his whole life long. He is certain he cannot be happy in faithfulness to any woman he marries now, while he is young, while he is still blinded and driven by his bodily ignorance of woman. He mistrusts the kind of marriage into which his unappeased desire might drive him.

Here is a real problem. It concerns thousands of young men. Its wide applicability is not to be gainsaid on the ground that Hetherly sees his predicament more clearly and states it more explicitly than most young men state or see theirs. His plight is theirs whether they know it or not. In the world most of us live in the dice are loaded against the young man whose need is unbought love without marriage.

In what kind of play has the author of Youth, Miles Malleson, discussed his problem? In an amusing play. Don't misunderstand me. If you are the sort of person who finds in every aspect of sex your peculiar food, if you go to the Comedy to snigger and wink, you will be disappointed. Mr. Malleson has done his best to disappoint you, and he has succeeded. He has taken his precautions against ribaldry. Hetherly, who like Mr. Malleson has written a play that makes such precautions useful, tells you what you are like if you leer. The sniggerer's point of view is carefully rendered odious. You object to frankness about sex? Your objections are spoken by some of the stupidest bigots on the stage, by Gunn, the producer of Hetherly's play, by May, the stage manager, by the man engaged to the girl who falls in love with Hetherly. By laughing at them you disable yourself to be on their side.

Youth is amusing too by its background, its pictures of life behind the scenes. Two of its three acts take place on the stage where Hetherly's play is given, the other in a dressing room. Maurice Donnay once said his method was to take something he had felt and surround it with something he had observed. Mr. Malleson, who has felt his problem and observed his theatre, uses his theatre-motif to break in upon, to keep crossing and interrupting, his problem-motif. The result is good fun.

Youth is decent and outspoken, quite free from watch-me-dare-to-be-outspokenness, quite free from the timidities to which an author uncertain to his own decency often resorts. It is also a queer affair. Although Mr. Malleson is obviously the last man in the world to stick a problem into his play coldly, for effect, although his interest in his problem is first-hand and genuine and living, he has no such grip on his problem as he has on the rest of his play. The very subject matter for the sake of which he wrote Youth is the part he has imagined least sharply. He has left his problem unexplored. He offers it less to our minds than to our ears. We hear about it, that is too nearly all we do. The final scenes, when the problem ought to be incarnate in Hetherly and Nina, are lean, hurried, blurred, insignificant. Near the end of the last act I felt as if the play had run aground, as if the characters were climbing out and running ashore. I felt at the very end as if Mr. Malleson had finished, in a workmanlike way, his theatre-motif scenes and had given us first drafts of his problem-motif scenes. A queer play, I thought, skilful and feeble, long where it ought to be short, short where it ought to be long, superficial and sincere.

Youth is full of indecisions. Nina, who falls in love with Hetherly, is engaged to Frank. Why? What difference would it have made if she hadn't been engaged? Suppose Youth had ended differently. What changes would have been necessary in the first two acts? None. These acts do not move toward any particular ending. No problem-current flows through them. Nina and Hetherly, when they discuss the problem, say things that are good, bad, indifferent, new, old, middle-aged. Do their best things and their poorest, the things they have read somewhere and the things that come from their hearts, sound to Mr. Malleson's ear as if all were of one quality? One doesn't know. One just uncomfortably wonders. Estelle, whose reappearance aggravates Hetherly's aversion to marriage, is described as "the strong enough girl." Does Mr. Malleson like this popular-magazine-coverish phrase?

But I wouldn't have missed Youth for a good deal. Sincerity shows through its fumbling and its facilities. In spite of its emotional and intellectual superficiality I am aware that its author's emotion was deep. And its fun is good. The minor characters, all easy to act, are acted well. Mr. Arthur Hohl is extremely good, has except just for a moment near the end of the third act a sure touch, in a part easy to wreck. I haven't space to say what I think of Mrs. Westley as Estelle and of Mr. Saxon Kling as Hetherly. Besides, it would not be polite.

Q. K.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Richard Harding Davis

Adventures and Letters of Richard Harding Davis, edited by Charles Belmont Davis. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.50.

MOST men who have had so much success as Richard Harding Davis, and so rosy a success, raise some expectation that there will be an inner life revealed by their intimate family letters. It is fascinating to discover that the supreme effect of Davis's letters is an externality almost too complete and simple to be credible. The adjustment of any character to a complex world is interesting—the happy adjustment of so simple a character is doubly interesting. And it provides an illuminating example of certain recent American standards and ideals.

Richard Harding Davis's brother, it must be remembered, selected and edited these letters, and a case for externality might too easily be made out from documents affectionately supervised. Externality, also, is a condescending word which had better be explained; yet even on the basis of these letters and in view of their supervision there is little reason to doubt the American blitheness, the honest sunny innocence and expansiveness of Richard Harding Davis's soul. Had he been a bond broker or a fashionable architect, perhaps, had he lived on the Main Line and made excursions to Point Pleasant or North-East Harbor, one might be satisfied to ascribe his limitation to the narrowness of his experience, and leave the matter there. But length and breadth of experience, if not thickness, were the conspicuous characteristics of his activity. He traveled continents as most people go from borough to borough, he ran across the ocean with the celerity that most people exhibit in taking a ferry. Coronations, state funerals, national conventions, last days and first nights, were all a commonplace of his experience, and in later years he seldom went for any length without a few months' attendance at a war. You may say that the extensiveness of his experience in other directions was merely superficial, but war is a serious affair, and he came to take wars as a Vesuvian takes eruptions, he spoke as a cold connoisseur of certain tame and unsuspecting wars. Yet though he was everywhere and met everybody, clearly well loved by his own following and enormously active in playing and working, he remained just as unreflective and undeveloped, from the standpoint of general ideas and human complexity, as if he had spent his life passing cake. It is the Americanism of this gift for philosophical passivity that is so fascinating—and, perhaps, so admirable. Why bother being philosophic if the world is satisfied when you wag your tail?

The Americanism did not come in so much in Davis's sportsmanlike code, his conscientious insistence on being a gentleman. The seriousness with which he lived up to that ideal, the seriousness with which he dressed it, was much more British than American, especially when one considers the provincial jeers and sneers he had to live down. Neither was there pronounced Americanism in the glad hand he extended to life, the way he liked to be liked and made himself likable in doing so. It was not a Whitmanesque cordiality, it was a clear sense that a gentleman ought to be cordial. To show friendship and be shown friendship cushions the hard world, and Richard Harding Davis hated unnecessary pain and did more than his share of the cushioning. Peter Dunne said of him that he "probably knew more waiters, generals, actors and princes than any man who lived." He went half-way to meet them, generous and unaffected, eager to redeem the handsome and convenient pledges of life and love, in which he roundly believed. Also, it was part of his code, like sending congratulatory telegrams and remembering birthdays and being "thoughtful" in the Huyler-and-Fleischman school of thoughtfulness, which is expressed by rising to one's feet and placing pillows for the ladies in the earlier grades of the same circumstantial school. This was American, as was his realization of the "brave and humorous playing of the game of life, the true heart, the wholesome body and soul," but much more characteristically national, more fundamentally himself, was the pinwheel activity that took up so much of his life.

Davis wrote his letters with his eye on the recipient. He wrote in a bright, sparkling spirit, he was almost always lively and attractive, peculiarly able to dramatize himself. But the huge part that his own activities occupied in his consciousness excluded almost everything but personal narrative. One concludes that what kept him going was a typically national acceptance of the game he was playing, and a preoccupation with the other people who were playing the same game. Genial as he was, his interests remained astonishingly simple. One could read all his letters without ever guessing that the social order which sunned him was itself under suspicion, or that there was any art of the theatre outside his admired circle, or any international relationships back of recurrent wars. He was really as childlike about these things as a fire "fan." When the bell of publicity rang he galloped to the fire: that was all. But when he galloped he felt that life itself was galloping. That was "the life."

Of course men like Gouverneur Morris talk glowingly of Davis and his work. In a sense Gouverneur Morris's own career as a writer of fiction is similar to Davis's, and if he was able to accept Davis's levity as an artist he might be forced to envisage his own. The clear truth, however, is the absence in Davis of any of the artistic detachment and independence which would have enabled him to see life. In 1890 his mother wrote him, "I dread beyond everything your beginning to do hack work for money. It is the beginning in decadence both in work and reputation for you." The warning was useless because Davis had already tasted the wine of popularity, and he was going to perform just as his friend Dana Gibson was performing, and as get-famous-quick Americans have performed since. No art had the attraction for Davis that knowing people had, and being in the thick of things, and getting his $1,000 a week.

Mr. Morris tells of R. H. D. at Aiken in 1912. "Before he came that first year our house had no name. Now it is called 'Let's Pretend.'" Mr. Morris describes R. H. D. working. "Breakfast over, there was no dawdling and putting off of the day's work (else how, at eleven sharp, could tennis be played with a free conscience?)" These two little touches are telltale. Davis did undoubtedly work punctiliously and carefully, but tennis had to be played. If he had been a bond broker, who would object to this? The point is, he is held forth as a pattern of American nobility and to that end his life is misconstrued. His gallantry and courage were rightly attributable to his code but so were his superficiality and his unreflectiveness, his gift for acquiring a seat in the stage box and his gospel according to Santa Claus. He was "one of those rarely gifted men," says Mr. Morris, "who find their chiefest pleasure not in looking backward or forward, but in what is going on at the moment." Mr. Morris means by this that Davis had verve and entered into the spirit of every occasion that life offered him. The sad fact remains, however, that his whole life was devoted to a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

discovery of those occasions into the spirit of which he could enter. In finding them he dissipated himself quite as much as if he were an irresistible hostess or a glorious M. F. H.

"He was the owner of a most enviable pair of eyes," says Peter Dunne, who understands everything, "which reported to him only what was pleasant and encouraging. A man is blessed or cursed by what his eyes see. To some people the world of men is a confused and undecipherable puzzle. To Mr. Davis it was a simple and pleasant pattern—good and bad, honest and dishonest, kind and cruel, with the good, the honest and the kind rewarded; the bad, the dishonest, and the cruel punished; where the heroes are modest, the brave generous, the women lovely."

Mr. Dunn adds, que voulez-vous? That is an easy way out of it but no one who is quite candid can accept the glowing romanticizer on just those terms. The air that Richard Harding Davis had about life was infinitely more consequential than the circumstances warranted. It is difficult to stand so much flourish, so much tally-ho trumpeting, for so little serious performance. His reporting was, indeed, serious performance. He was a first-rate reporter. He had all the energy, the courage, the quick impressionability, the vivacity, that make a great reporter what he is. But the immense paraphernalia of imaginary obligations that he carried with him, his emphasis on ritual and college-boy form, his preposterous mask that eventually became the only face he mustered cannot but provoke a critical tone. It is not that he was a poseur. It is that his primitiveness, his fetish-worship, impressed all kinds of people and made him a hero and increased the nonsense in life. His independence about the Boer war, his bravery about seeing personal idiosyncrasies and preferences through, had a touch of heroism. He was, as I read him, extraordinarily likable and admirable in various ways. But the final word is one of prematurity and immaturity. Like many handsome and idolized American college men, he never quite graduated, and his friends kept him living in the Golden Age. F. H.

Topography and Treachery

Topography and Strategy of the War, by Douglas Johnson. New York: Henry Holt & Co. $1.75.

TWO points especially impress themselves upon the reader of this scholarly treatise: the controlling influence topography retains over strategy in spite of the tremendous advances in the mechanical equipment of armies; and the uncanny skill of the Germans in availing themselves of topographical advantages. Whatever may have been the case with the stars in their courses, the hills and rivers and swamps have been made to fight for the Germans—except at the Marne.

Everyone has known since 1914 that there were powerful topographical reasons for the invasion of France through Belgium. As the layman understood it, the Germans might have invaded France from the east, but they would have suffered heavy losses before penetrating the frontier defenses. One who follows carefully Professor Johnson's analysis of the terrain between the eastern frontier and the heart of France is forced to the conclusion that Germany would not merely have lost precious time in attempting to enter France from the east. Her invasion would have been a failure, just as the attacks at the Grand Couronné and at Verdun were failures. It was a case of either invading France through Belgium or of not successfully invading France at all. At all events the Germans have never, in any of their campaigns, overcome such a succession of topographical obstacles as the escarpments of eastern France. This fact may explain also why the lines in Flanders and north France are so much more strongly held than the lines further south. If the Germans are actually to attempt to break through and force fighting in the open, they really have no choice except the plains of the north, unless they are willing to fight in a succession of disadvantageous positions.

In the eastern theatre of the war the early successes of the Germans are all explainable in terms of favorable terrain. When the Russians imprudently thrust their armies into the lake country of East Prussia, they were overwhelmed; as soon as the retreating Prussians had succeeded in falling back to the line of the Bobr and Narew marshes, and had topography with them, the Germans were hurled back. In the great Galician campaign, the topography may be said to have been more nearly neutral. The Germans appear to have outgeneraled the Russians at every point, but their smashing success can only be explained by the inefficiency and treachery that left without ammunition vital points in the succession of Russian defensive positions.

In her attack on Serbia Austria had the disadvantage of terrain, and as a result, all her attacks were failures until the treachery of Bulgaria exposed Serbia to an attack all along her flank. The Austro-German attack on Rumania through the passes to the east and north were all failures; the penetration of Rumanian soil took place only after the Rumanian army had been allowed to run out of ammunition, through Russian treachery. We have been in the habit of viewing Rumanian belligerency as a colossal mistake, but if it had not been for the disastrous failure of ammunition supplies, Rumania would probably have been able to hold out for months and to inflict tremendous losses upon the invaders. Indeed, when one follows through Professor Johnson's analysis of the topography of the Rumanian border, he can hardly escape the conviction that the Germans, before undertaking the invasion, had good reason to believe that the supplies of ammunition in Russia would not go forward to the Rumanian armies.

The book was written before the Italian disaster, but the study of the topography of the Isonzo and Trentino fronts helps to explain it. The author does not deal in predictions as a rule, but he did venture the prophecy that if the Austrians broke through on the Isonzo the Italians would make a stand on the Tagliamento, which they did not, or on the Piave, which they did. He offers no prophecies as to what may happen at Saloniki, but the plain conclusion from his topographical study is that a successful offensive on the part of the Allies through the Vardar valley would be practically out of the question, and that a successful assault by the forces of the Central Powers upon the Allied positions around Saloniki would be equally out of the question. The Central Powers have not overcome such difficulties of terrain as they would encounter at Saloniki, except by treachery.

Naumann, in his *Mitteleuropa*, advanced the doctrine that trench warfare had rendered obsolete the old conception of the strategic frontier. Professor Johnson's study wholly refutes this doctrine. In spite of the aeroplane and cannon that combine accuracy with overwhelming powers of destruction, the configuration of the land is of controlling importance in defense. If the war is to end without an organization for permanent peace, this fact must certainly be taken into account in fixing the boundaries of states.

A. J.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Guild Idyl

Old Worlds for New, by Arthur J. Penty. New York: Sunwise Turn, Inc.

AT a time when revolutionary socialism is the dominating force in Russia, and threatens to become a controlling force in England and France, it is strange that we have so little literature outlining the ideas and principles that are more or less articulately behind this new impetus. Bertrand Russell, in Political Ideals, has given us a primer of ideas more or less new, and there are recent competent books on guild principles by S. G. Hobson and G. D. H. Cole. Orage's standard book on National Guilds has not had anything like the circulation it deserves in this country. To the American mind, the group of ideas which these fertile English minds are growing around the stock of "guild-socialism" seems still as remote as the folkways of the remotest tribe. Only the outlawed I. W. Ws, whom reputable American opinion has so heartily agreed to consign to the lowest of all spiritual castes, have had the energy to translate some of the French syndicalists and start a pamphlet literature of revolutionary unionism. The rest of us seem resolutely opaque to ideas of which the most ardent radicals and, it is said, large elements in the armies of the western democracies are forming their vision of future society, and towards which the masses in ferment are coming to throw their hopes.

In England, the group which started the New Age is said to have set in motion a current of ideas which is making over the aims and philosophy of the labor movement. Their thought has corrected the crudities of French syndicalism, which contemplated a Labor State, subject to all the disadvantages of the present political state, or else destined to fall apart into an anarchy of warring labor units. Guild socialism offers a new social pattern, whereby the state would share its sovereignty with the unified national industries, organized as labor guilds, proletariat and salariat combining in self-governing control over conditions of employment, hours and division of labor, and so forth. The guilds would be responsible for a certain specified productivity to the state, which, representing all the people, would fix prices, guarantee minimum standards, and administer the indispensable communal services of society.

Mr. Penty's book is not the happiest that could be chosen by a New York bookshop to make these ideas intelligible to and popular with American readers. He opens with the usual attack on the Fabians and the collectivist socialism of the Webbs. For the guild socialist sees state socialism as no better than a reformed industrialism. The state will have superseded rather than destroyed the capitalist, and society, organized on quasi-military lines, would be as remote as ever from industrial democracy. The politico-industrial machinery might be socialized, and the status of the worker left relatively unchanged. It is for the complete abolition of the wage system that the guild socialist passionately contends. Mr. Penty's chapters are not systematic, but his argument against the Fabians and his comments on the guild ideas are always interesting.

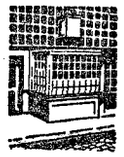
He is an artist, however, rather than an economist, and he leaves certain dogmas such as that "collectivism means a further speeding-up of exploitation," that "the investment of surplus wealth decreases employment," that "the workers could and should strike for a raise in the standards of craftmanship," undocumented and unanalyzed. It is thus that he raises almost as many questions as he answers. And they are economic questions which ramify too far to answer themselves. Mr. Penty says, for instance, that the workers' emancipation is bound up with local industries and small markets, because an extensive foreign trade is dependent on capitalist adventurers. But will not the scarcity of raw materials after the war force a rapacious development of the unexploited resources of the earth to supply the exhausted western world? If the workers' emancipation is to depend on small industries and local markets, then our guild idea is chimerical. Unless the guild socialist can make the freedom of labor and the abolition of wagery consistent with a continued access to raw materials in foreign parts, he must dismiss his hope. But it is almost blithely that Mr. Penty passes over searching problems like these.

His artistic interest makes him feel too warmly the medieval charm of the guild idea. For, in spite of the glow of tradition which still follows it in Europe, men's enthusiasm presses towards new rather than "old worlds," and towards a life that shall be modern, even if it has tamed industrialism. Mr. Penty persists in thinking of industry in terms of craftsmanship, ignoring all those activities which have to do with the production of raw materials and with transportation. In only a portion of the industrial world would his proposed "strike for quality" have a meaning. Everywhere, however, industrial activities do provide a certain scope for economy of means and a skill of resource, so that the appeal might be made to what Veblen calls the instinct of workmanship. It is upon this impulse rather than any sentiment for arts and crafts that the new guild society must be built.

TIFFANY & CO.
GOLD AND SILVERSMITHS
ARTICLES OF UTILITY
SUPERIOR IN QUALITY
MODERATE IN PRICE
FIFTH AVENUE AND 37TH STREET
NEW YORK

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A NEW PHILIP GOODMAN BOOK

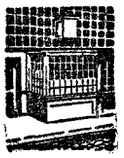


DAMN! A BOOK OF CALUMNY.
BY H. L. MENCKEN

Forty-nine little essays of fulmination, none of which should get into the hands of the timid. A Mencken Opinion Book — some daring, some amusing, *all* interesting. 90c Net

PHILIP GOODMAN CO., PUBLISHERS, NEW YORK

A NEW PHILIP GOODMAN BOOK



HOW'S YOUR SECOND ACT?
BY ARTHUR HOPKINS

For the first time, America's foremost theatrical producer sets down his theory. A new view-point on Acting, Writing, Presentation and Critics. 90c Net

PHILIP GOODMAN CO., PUBLISHERS, NEW YORK

A NEW PHILIP GOODMAN BOOK

A BOOK WITHOUT A TITLE.
BY GEORGE JEAN NATHAN

Not a book on the Theatre, but one containing Prose Poems in Pastel and Miniature, cleverly designed, subtly philosophic, shrewdly cynical. It is Mr. Nathan's most distinguished book. 90c Net

PHILIP GOODMAN CO., PUBLISHERS, NEW YORK

THE DIAL

is attracting the attention of *forward thinking* people

Thorstein Veblein says: "There is insistent need of such a journal as The Dial, to speak without fear or favor or respect of persons, and with a clear vision of the shifting forces that are now beginning to make the New Order—to speak sanely and soberly without undue emphasis of outworn preconceptions."

New subscribers may secure one year's subscription to The Dial, and also the new two-volume edition of Nexo's "Pelle, the Conqueror," by sending their check for $4.00

$7.00 value for $4.00

THE DIAL

608 SOUTH DEARBORN STREET, CHICAGO

The economists among the guild socialists do not commit this fallacy. Mr. Penty rightly emphasizes the fact that wherever men in all civilizations have united in co-operative labor on guild principles, a richer personal, artistic and communal life seems to have sprung up. But this is not equivalent to his implication that machinery must make way again for craftsmanship. For labor must learn to master machinery as well as free itself from capitalist exploitation. Whether the use of machinery is to result in industrialism depends on the creative will of the freed and organized workers. Should not the ideal be to design and utilize machinery in the interests of craftsmanship wherever possible, instead of, as at present, in the interests of uniform and quantitative production? The hope of the guild socialists is that the new organization of industry will liberate the creative spirit as it did in the Middle Ages. But in this they do not mean a dilettante return to "old worlds," forever passed away.

R. B.

German Aims

What Germany Is Fighting For, by Sir Charles Waldstein. London: Longmans, Green & Co. Sixty cents.

AN author who wrote a book with the above title would, if he were scrupulously exact, write a different book in 1914-15 than in 1915-16, and probably a different one in 1915-1916 than in 1916-17. The date line of the author's introduction is June, 1917, before the Reichstag resolution for "no forcible annexations." In any case, he would hardly by the 1st of January, 1918 give the same emphasis to such extreme Pan-German ambitions, expressed by Professor Dietrich Shäfer in Das Grössere Deutschland last February, on which, in the present monograph, he bases most of his case. Of course a cynic might say that this shift—if there be a shift—in Germany's intentions was merely the reflex of the military situation, that it represented no change of heart but only a recognition of what was possible. The argument cuts both ways. Are any of the other belligerents today fighting for the same aims they professed when the war began? No one would at present seriously maintain that they were. But if the author is too certain of his contentions on his main point, a final essay called The Social Gulf Between England and Germany makes admirable amends. He discusses the difference brought about by the absence of "sport" in Germany and its adoration in England. It is a provocative study in acquired social characteristics.

Contributors

to this issue

ELIZABETH SHEPLEY SERGEANT has been in France for several months and is contributing a series of articles to the New Republic.

LEO STEIN is a New Yorker who has lived much in France and Italy and who has made a life study of painting.

R. L. DUFFUS is an editorial writer on the staff of the San Francisco Bulletin.

H. SIDEBOTHAM is the military critic of the Manchester Guardian and the editor of the Manchester Guardian's History of the War.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED